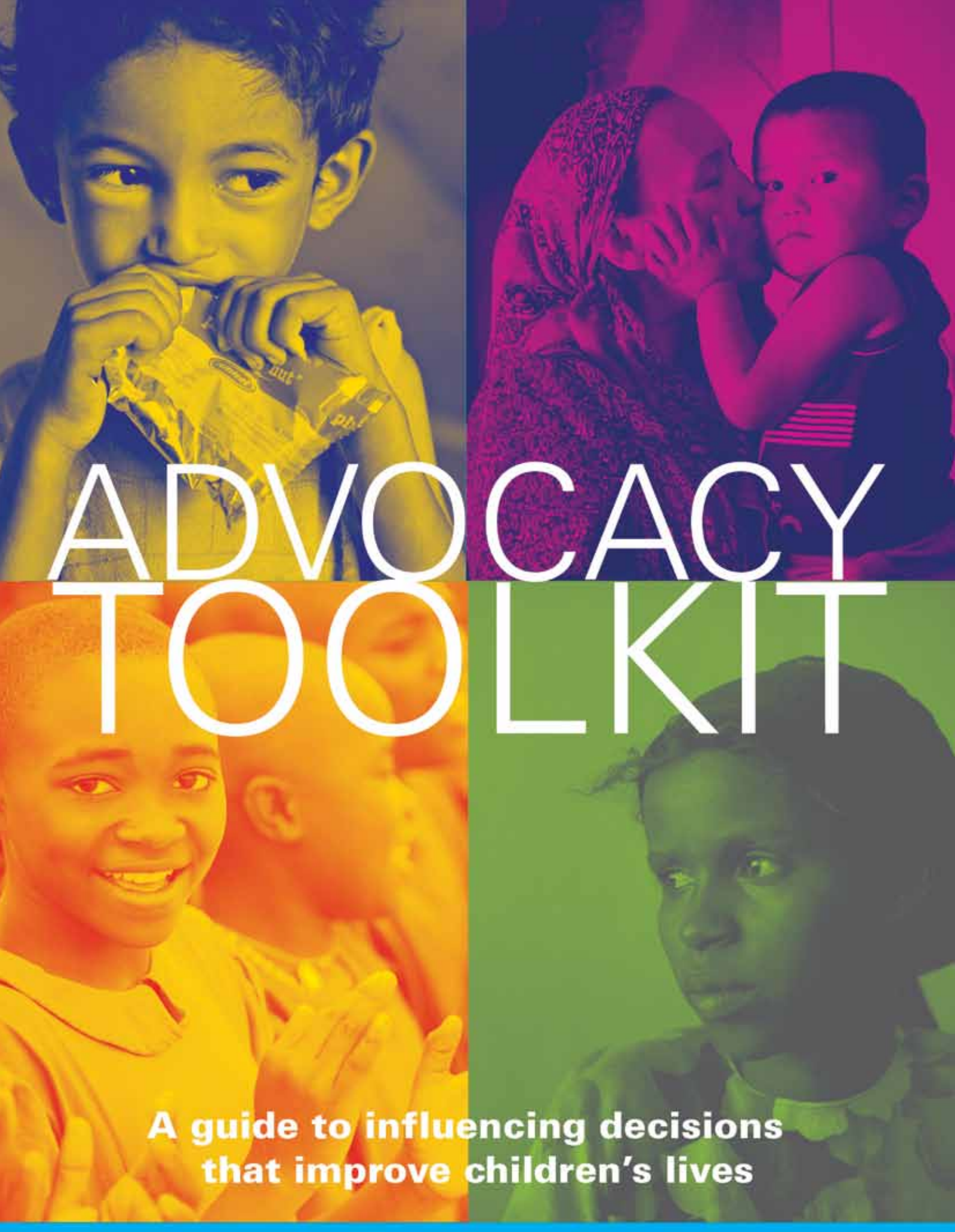

# ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

**A guide to influencing decisions that improve children's lives**

unite for children

unicef

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FIRST EDITION

# ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

## A guide to influencing decisions that improve children's lives

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# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| C4D | Communication for Development |
| CCCs | Core Commitments for Children (UNICEF) |
| CDC | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| CSO | civil society organization |
| DFID | Department for International Development (UK) |
| ECCO | Episodic Communication Channels in Organizations |
| EMOPS | Office of Emergency Programmes (UNICEF) |
| G8 | Group of Eight (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) |
| G20 | Group of Twenty (Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors) |
| GIVAS | Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System |
| HQ | headquarters |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| M&E | monitoring and evaluation |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for Africa's Development |
| NGO | non-governmental organization |
| RSS | Really Simple Syndication |
| SMART | specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, time-bound |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNGEI | United Nations Girls' Education Initiative |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

# About the Advocacy Toolkit

UNICEF has an exceptional history of advocating to protect and promote children's and women's rights. The *Advocacy Toolkit* stems from this, systematizing and coordinating both internal and external advocacy expertise, as well developing a few innovative approaches. The *Toolkit* provides a set of practical tools to help UNICEF staff and partners in the development and management of their advocacy work.

**Who is this Toolkit for?**
The *Advocacy Toolkit* is applicable for all levels of the organization as a resource for building a structured approach for sustained advocacy. The tools are particularly relevant for UNICEF country offices and national committees, but its content will also be valuable to anyone who wants to expand their understanding of the human rights-based approach to advocacy and how this approach is applied.

**What can you learn from this Toolkit?**
The *Advocacy Toolkit* provides a broadly accepted definition of advocacy and underscores UNICEF's unique position and experience in advocacy. The heart of the *Toolkit* provides detailed steps, guidance and tools for developing and implementing an advocacy strategy. The *Toolkit* also outlines eight foundational areas that can help strengthen an office's capacity for advocacy, and covers several crosscutting aspects of advocacy including monitoring and evaluating advocacy, managing knowledge in advocacy, managing risks in advocacy, building relationships and securing partnerships for advocacy, and working with children and young people in advocacy. Special focuses examine a variety of specific topics, including human rights and equity approaches to advocacy, theories of change, and conducting advocacy in humanitarian situations.

**How can you make the most of this Toolkit?**
While navigating this *Toolkit*, it is important to remember that these are only one set of potentially useful tools, and that there is not one particular approach or method that should be ascribed to advocacy in UNICEF. Rather the aim is to provide readers with ideas for creating their own advocacy initiative, based on the reality in the environment in which they operate. Furthermore, although this *Toolkit* is ideally examined in the sequence it is written, it has been designed so that users can quickly navigate to particular tools in which they are most interested, and use them as they see fit.

**What are the next steps?**
Advocacy is a very large topic, encompassing aspects from a variety of different disciplines, and so there will undoubtedly be specific issues that this *Toolkit* does not cover. However, this publication is an important step towards further strengthening advocacy in UNICEF, and is designed as a 'living document', which will evolve. Additional guidance on using the tools in relation to country offices and national committee planning processes will aim to incorporate the experience that is generated as a result of using these tools, and provide more guidelines and good examples on specific advocacy issues and approaches that UNICEF country offices and national committees may face. Future related work also includes identifying and outlining how different parts of the organization can effectively work together for advocacy.

**Special features throughout the Toolkit are noted by the following symbols:**

**Tool**

**Case Study**

**Special Focus**

**Highlight**

# Understanding Advocacy in UNICEF

**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."** *– Margaret Mead*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2007-1364/Giacomo Pirozzi

# 1 Understanding Advocacy in UNICEF

**Chapter 1 aims to provide a clearer view of what advocacy means in UNICEF. It also reviews our strengths, as well as areas we can develop further.**

## 1.1 Background: UNICEF's mission

UNICEF has tremendous potential to change the world for children through advocacy. Advocacy is a core process for addressing the disparities children face, bringing the issue to the forefront of the agenda for decision makers. And given our mandate, experience and global recognition, we are in a strong position to speak on behalf of children and enable children to speak on their own behalf.

UNICEF has a well-developed history of realizing this potential. Since its inception in 1946, advocacy has been one of the organization's key functions, and at the heart of the programmes, which over the years, has been central in efforts to fulfil children's rights.

The importance of advocacy is affirmed in our mission statement:

- UNICEF is *mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights*, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.
- UNICEF is *guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child* and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children.
- UNICEF insists that the survival, protection and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress.
- UNICEF *mobilizes political will and material resources* to help countries, particularly developing countries, ensure a "first call for children" and to *build their capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services* for children and their families.
- UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children – victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation and those with disabilities.

- UNICEF responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies, UNICEF makes its unique facilities for rapid response available to its partners to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide their care.

- UNICEF is non-partisan and its cooperation is free of discrimination. In everything it does, the most disadvantaged children and the countries in greatest need have priority.

- UNICEF aims, through its country programmes, to *promote the equal rights of women and girls* and to support their full participation in the political, social, and economic development of their communities.

- UNICEF works with all its partners towards the attainment of the sustainable human development goals adopted by the world community and the realization of the vision of peace and social progress enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.[1]

The human rights-based approach is at the heart of all UNICEF advocacy. Guiding principles are provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC),[2] which names UNICEF as a specialized agency that may be called on to provide expert advice on implementing the Convention.[3] Other keystones are the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These treaties, along with such other documents, provide the basis for advocacy with all levels of government, development partners, policymakers, non-governmental organizations, civil society, community members and children.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## The Latin roots of advocacy

Advocacy originates from ***advocare***, 'call to one's aid' or to speak out on behalf of someone, as a legal counsellor. Conceptually, advocacy fits into a range of activities that include organizing, lobbying and campaigning.

Organizing is a broad-based activity designed to ensure that the views represented in advocacy come from those who are actually affected by the issue. Lobbying derives from the Latin word *loggia*, a room where one would meet directly with decision makers to engage in (often private) quality discussions and debate. Compared to organizing, lobbying takes a more targeted approach and reaches out to fewer people. On the other end of the spectrum, the Latin origin for campaigning is ***campus***, the wider battlefield. An advocacy campaign publicly promotes an agenda, involving platforms where a wide audience can hear the advocate's message.

Based on input from Alison Marshall, UK National Committee, and Jyothi Kanics, PFP Geneva

1 UNICEF's Mission Statement is available at www.unicef.org/about/who/index_mission.htm; emphasis added.

2 To open a PDF of the full-text 'Certified True Copy' of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, access the following URL: http://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1990/09/19900902%2003-14%20AM/Ch_IV_11p.pdf.

3 Convention on the Rights of the Child, Part II, article 45.

## 1.2 Defining advocacy in UNICEF

The dictionary defines an advocate as someone who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy and a person who pleads a case on someone else's behalf.[4] UNICEF has long been an advocate for children, but it hasn't always had a clear definition or consistent approach to advocacy. Although there are many valid definitions and many ways to advocate, based on UNICEF's work and experience, one simple, overarching definition could be:

**Advocacy is the deliberate process, based on demonstrated evidence, to directly and indirectly influence decision makers, stakeholders and relevant audiences to support and implement actions that contribute to the fulfilment of children's and women's rights.**

Elaborating on this: advocacy involves delivering evidence-based recommendations to decision makers, stakeholders and/or those who influence them. Advocacy is a means of seeking change in governance, attitudes, power, social relations and institutional functions. It supports actions which are taken at scale, and which address deeper, underlying barriers to the fulfilment of children's rights. The goal of advocacy can be to address imbalances, inequity and disparities, promote human rights, social justice, a healthy environment, or to further the opportunities for democracy by promoting children's and women's participation. Advocacy requires organizing and organization. It represents a set of strategic actions and, at its most vibrant, will influence the decisions, practices and policies of others.

SPECIAL FOCUS

### Advocacy to achieve equity

Advocacy is a core process for addressing inequity and disparities. Advocacy addresses inequity by bringing the issue of child disparities to the forefront of the agenda for decision makers, by building awareness, visibility and public momentum behind the issue, and by improving access, cost and quality of programmes and services for disadvantaged children and women. Central to its approach is obtaining disaggregated data on who are the most disadvantaged and excluded, gaining a deep understanding of the root causes of the problem, and creating an enabling environment so that the problem can be addressed. This involves strengthening the accountability of decision-makers to the most disadvantaged children and women, and supporting the most disadvantaged children and women in claiming their rights. Advocacy addresses underlying causes of problems to achieve equity, and addresses issues of equity to solve underlying causes of problems.

Advocacy in UNICEF is understood and undertaken through a variety of overlapping forms. In the medium-term strategic plan, Focus Area 5 – policy, advocacy and partnerships for children's rights – has a focus on advocacy. **But advocacy is integral to all of UNICEF's Focus Areas.** Advocacy is at the heart of influencing upstream decisions that affect health, education, protection, and HIV and AIDS in favour of children. Similarly, humanitarian advocacy is an essential element of UNICEF's work in emergencies, from creating openings for humanitarian access to obtaining regional agreements on cross-border returns. This toolkit hopes to provide tools and methods that support the broad range of advocacy undertaken by UNICEF.

4 Soanes, Catherine, and Angus Stevenson, editors, Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 11th ed., Oxford University Press, New York, 2004, p. 19.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## The human rights based approach to advocacy

The human rights-based approach (HBRA) looks at the context for children in terms of the rights they have, the shortfalls in their enjoyment of those rights, and, most importantly, the ways in which the action, or inaction, of those with power determine those shortfalls. The advocate then seeks to alter that action to the advantage of those rights. There are multiple ways to seek such changes, but when the focus becomes changing the actions of those with power, the role of advocacy becomes more prominent.

Rights-based advocacy requires both the achievement of desirable outcomes and achieving them through a process that reflects human rights values. A Human Rights Based Approach to advocacy starts with an understanding of children's situations as based on the identification of shortfalls in realization of their rights, as well as those whose actions or inactions contribute to such shortfalls. It also has the following characteristics:

1. It promotes participation, based on the belief that all people, including children and young people, are entitled to a say in the decisions that affect them. Rights-based advocacy recognises children, women and men as key actors in their development by having them use and organize their sources of power to claim their rights. It entails the building of community capacity for children and women to understand their rights, to claim their rights, and to make meaningful contribution to realizing these rights. Rights-based advocacy facilitates participation in societal decision-making as an objective in itself. It calls for a people-centred approach and child-centred approach to advocacy, to address inequity.

2. It targets accountability of those with duties or obligations towards children and women, recognising that holding those with power accountable to rights holders is key to sustainable institutional and social arrangements that guarantee children their rights.

3. It emphasizes that all rights apply to all children without exception or discrimination. It highlights patterns in the non-fulfilment of rights that reveal underlying conditions of marginalization and exclusion, and addresses these issues. Its focus is also to bring a more equitable power distribution in the society, thereby improving the condition and position of the rights holders by addressing causes of rights violations at all levels — immediate, underlying and root.

4. It makes clear its foundations in the legal duties of governments and the ethical duties of all people, drawing both on the obligations arising from ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the enduring moral principles of children's rights that the Convention reflects. Rights-based advocacy strives to ensure that national laws and policies are

## 1.3 Creating a common language for advocacy

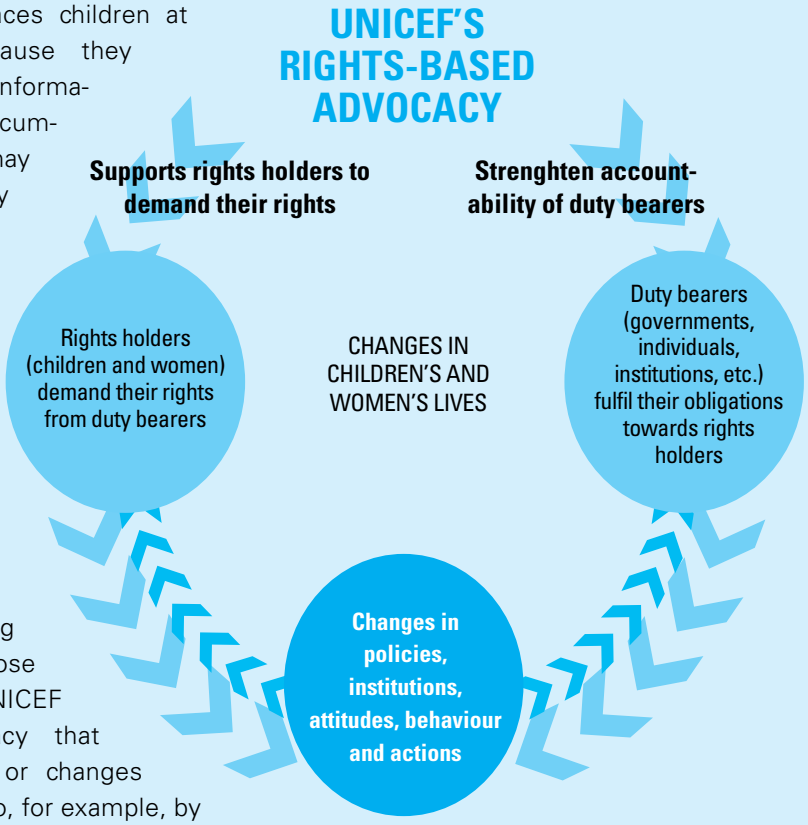
**Keep in mind** The key to understanding what constitutes advocacy in UNICEF is asking the question: Can the action be incorporated into, or is it already part of, a wider strategy or coordinated approach to influence decision makers and change power relationships to achieve large-scale gains for children and the realization of children's and women's rights?

In practice, there are several terms used interchangeably to describe advocacy work. Upstream engagement, lobbying, public relations, policy development, awareness raising, empowerment, social mobilization, campaigning, media work and communications can all be terms for advocacy. Furthermore, advocacy is not translated the same way in every language – sometimes even *trying* to translate it is difficult.

## The human rights based approach to advocacy *cont.*

in conformity with international human rights instruments.

Advocacy can seek such changes by informing its members, organizations and decision makers to take necessary actions. There are circumstances where duty bearers are acting (or failing to act) in a manner that places children at a disadvantage because they lack knowledge or information. In these circumstances UNICEF may seek to educate duty bearers and change behaviour in that way. In other circumstances, duty bearers may be acting (or failing to act) in a manner which disadvantages children because of prejudice, negligence, indifference or competing incentives. In those circumstances, UNICEF may pursue advocacy that challenges prejudice or changes incentives. It will do so, for example, by mobilizing public opinion to attach a higher cost to governmental inaction. In perhaps a majority of cases there will be multiple factors behind a duty bearer's decision to act or fail to act in a particular way, and as a result, effective and comprehensive advocacy strategies will usually combine multiple approaches. The concepts described above can be depicted as follows:




Based on input from Dan Seymour, Gender Rights and Civic Engagement (GRACE), Division of Policy and Practice, UNICEF.

The variety of terms and definitions might lead to different understandings among staff members about what advocacy is and isn't. This can result in situations where an important part of a coordinated advocacy strategy, initiative or approach is left out. Therefore, it is essential to create a common language for advocacy within UNICEF.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Communication for Development (C4D)

Communication for Development (C4D) is one of the most empowering ways of improving health, nutrition and other key social outcomes for children and their families. In UNICEF, C4D is defined as a systematic, planned and evidence-based strategic process to promote positive and measurable individual behaviour and social change that is an integral part of development programmes, policy advocacy and humanitarian work. C4D is not public relations or corporate communications; it involves children, their families and communities in dialogue, consultation and participation – based on understanding their local context.

C4D is a cross-cutting practice area in UNICEF. C4D strategies that promote behaviour and social change are essential for long-term, sustainable development, as no matter how well commodities are distributed, services provided or systems strengthened, children will continue to die from preventable diseases and have their physical, social, emotional and cognitive development compromised, if their families and communities do not also care for, protect and nurture them more effectively. C4D strategies and approaches are required to help provide caregivers and community members with essential information and to help develop the skills and self confidence that they require to make informed decisions on issues that affect their lives and their children's well-being. Supportive policies and legislation, resources and service delivery systems need to be introduced and strengthened. But unless engagement and empowerment of parents, caregivers and local organizations is ensured, legislative reform and service and supply efforts on their own will have limited long-term impact.

UNICEF understands that sustained behaviour and social change is effective only when combined with changes in the broader socio-economic environment within which families and communities live and in which children survive and thrive. Its work therefore includes addressing underlying and contextual factors such as government policies, gender inequalities, social exclusion and systems of representation.

Building on UNICEF's guiding principles and on the human rights-based approach to programming (HRBAP), particularly the right to information, communication and participation enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (articles 12, 13 and 17), values and principles that guide UNICEF's C4D work include:

- Facilitate enabling environments that:
  - Create spaces for plurality of voices and narratives of community
  - Encourage listening, dialogue, debate and consultation
  - Ensure the active and meaningful participation of children and youth
  - Promote gender equality and social inclusion
- Reflect the principles of inclusion, self-determination, participation and respect by ensuring that marginalized groups (including indigenous populations and people with disabilities) are prioritized and given high visibility and voice
- Link community perspectives with sub-national and national policy dialogue
- Start early and address the WHOLE child, including the physical, cognitive, emotional, social and spiritual aspects
- Ensure that children are reflected as agents of change and as a primary participant group, starting from the early childhood years
- Build the self-esteem and confidence of care providers and children.

Based on input from Rina Gill, Paula Claycomb and Teresa Stuart, Gender Rights and Civic Engagement (GRACE), Division of Policy and Practice, UNICEF.

| Advocacy involves … | particularly when it is geared to … |
|---|---|
| **awareness raising, communications and media work** | enhance UNICEF's credibility and legitimacy as an advocate by promoting its public image and visibility;<br>deliver persuasive, evidence-based and solution-oriented messages to the public, decision-makers, stakeholders and those who influence them. |
| **communication for behaviour change** | create an enabling environment for effective implementation of policy changes to protect the rights of children and women, as well as to allow their voices to be heard at the highest level |
| **developing partnerships/ coalitions/ alliances** | generate organizational support and momentum behind issues, connect messengers with decision-makers, and utilize diversity to achieve common advocacy goals |
| **lobbying and negotiating** | one-on-one discussions with decision-makers to influence them to change policy, practice or behaviour |
| **campaigning** | create and mobilize the public around the advocacy issue, change perceptions, and build support to influence decision-makers and stakeholders |
| **research/ publications** | illustrate the underlying causes and solutions to a problem, and draw recommendations which can be addressed by decision-makers and stakeholders |
| **work with children and young people** | facilitate the creation of a platform for children and young people's voices to be heard and acted-on by decision-makers and stakeholders |
| **social mobilization** | engage multiple levels of society, including those who are marginalized, as allies and partners in overcoming barriers to implementation of programmes to protect children and women |
| **conferences/ events** | bring together a variety of stakeholders and decision-makers to highlight the causes and identify the solutions to the issue, with follow-up that includes concrete and immediate action |

## 1.4 UNICEF's strengths and challenges

This section is based on discussions with UNICEF colleagues (largely from the Policy Advocacy Community of Practice) on our strengths and challenges in advocacy.

UNICEF is in a unique position, having a *defined responsibility* for the realization of a major international human rights treaty, the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, the organization's well-defined mandate and mission statement create a bridge between political and social actors.

UNICEF's *earned reputation* is a powerful source of strength. Our reputation reflects credibility and results for children, spanning more than half a century. This gives UNICEF a recognized, global brand across an array of governments, institutions, community-based and non-governmental organizations, and individuals. Other strengths identified by the Community of Practice include:

- Strong communications platforms at the global, regional, country and national committee levels.
- A wealth of technical knowledge, gained mostly from practical experience, which has resulted in demonstrable, positive and sustainable outcomes for children and women.
- High-level access and a strong voice to engage with people and institutions with power to make changes for children.
- A history of effectively engaging with children and young people to advocate at all levels on their own behalf.
- Strong partnerships with national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and with sub-national government offices that provide opportunities to work with families and communities and ensure their voices are heard at the highest levels.

UNICEF has also identified areas that need reinforcement to allow our organization to become an even more effective advocate for children's rights. That in itself is a strength. Challenges discussed include:

- The need for increased capacity for advocacy. This would require guidance on planning, conducting and evaluating advocacy; training on advocacy; guidance on budgeting and costing advocacy; and collating best practices and lessons learned.
- The need for an organizational framework that effectively links different parts of the organization together for advocacy. Clear messaging that resonates through all levels of the organization is also essential.
- The need to further bring children and young people into policy dialogue as active stakeholders and not just beneficiaries. Community members should also be consulted more often for their views and for their support in changing policy, because they can influence decision makers and can reinforce positive social norms and cultural practices that create an enabling environment to support sustainable social change.
- Stronger policy analysis would intensify UNICEF's impact as an advocate, particularly in macroeconomic and social policy issues. Evidence and analysis needs to be packaged in a way that provides convincing arguments for policy change.
- The need to strengthen partnerships and work with the international financial institutions (IFIs), donors and other agencies involved in establishing policy. It is particularly important for UNICEF to be engaged 'at the table' in policy discussions with national governments and the IFIs. We should take advantage of opportunities to communicate through different media and to further engage the private sector, as well as non-traditional policy actors.

2

# Strengthening the Foundation for Advocacy

**"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals."** *– Martin Luther King Jr.*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2010-0734/Roger LeMoyne

# 2 Strengthening the Foundation for Advocacy

**Building robust capacities within an office is the foundation for effective and far-reaching advocacy. Chapter 2 reviews eight foundation areas for stronger advocacy:**

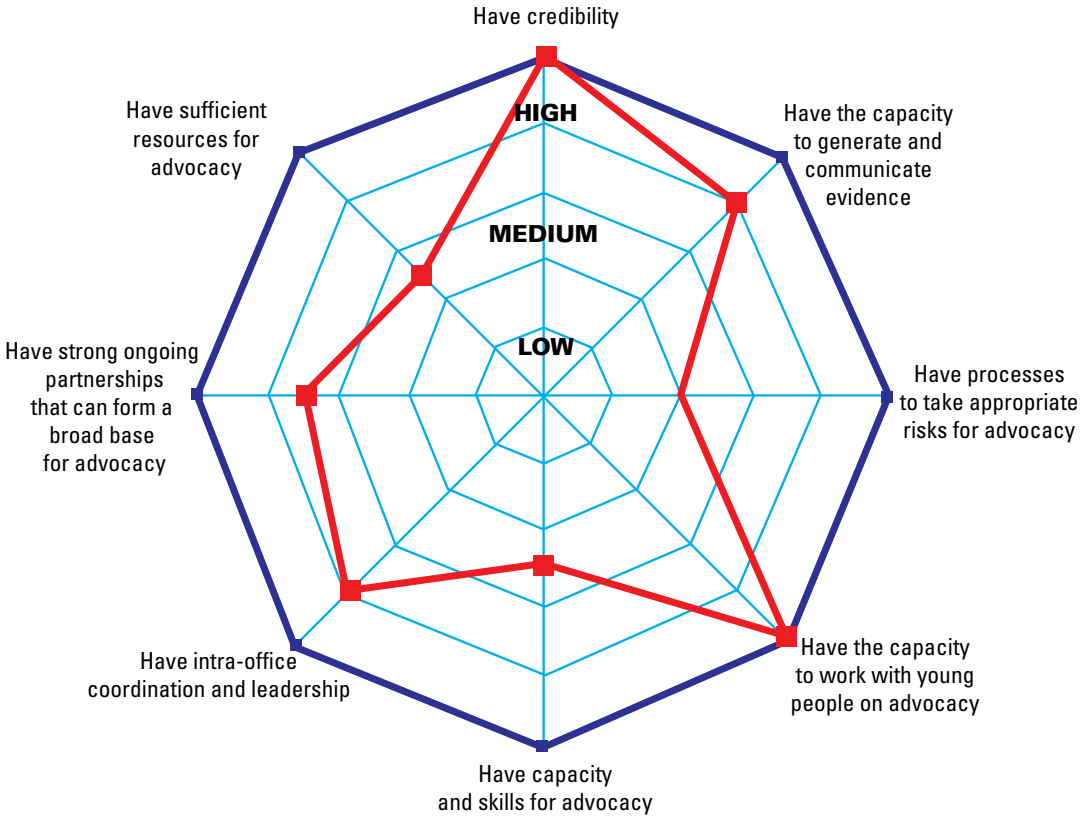
1. **Credibility**
2. **Skills**
3. **Intra-office coordination and leadership**
4. **Capacity to generate and communicate relevant evidence**
5. **Ability to assess risks**
6. **Capacity to work with children and young people**
7. **Long-term partnerships that can form a broad base for advocacy**
8. **Sufficient resources**

## 2.1 Eight Foundation Areas

Building and maintaining a foundation for advocacy should be a continuous process, extending throughout the stages of creating and implementing an advocacy strategy. Broad recognition and understanding of these Foundation Areas can buttress our capacities for successful advocacy and enhance our ability to respond to (sometimes sudden) changes that can occur during implementation of an advocacy plan.

**Keep in mind** Effective advocacy can still be carried out even if we don't have full capacity in every one of these areas. While we strive to strengthen our foundation, this shouldn't keep us from undertaking advocacy.

UNICEF offices at all levels already have many of the Foundation Areas in place for undertaking advocacy. The solutions for how to improve these areas will vary by context. For each Foundation Area outlined in the following pages, 'elements to consider' offer specific guidelines that one might want to take into account.




The chart above represents an example of an evaluation of the eight Foundation Areas in a hypothetical office:

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### Foundation Area 1 Credibility

As an advocate, it is crucial for UNICEF that governments, institutions and the communities we work with trust the organization and value what we have to say. What makes UNICEF an effective advocate is our credibility, built over the years working for children. Expertise and trusting relationships, complemented by strong research and analysis, form the cornerstones of credibility.

**Elements to consider**[5]

- Can UNICEF legitimately speak on behalf of those affected by the issues?
- Is UNICEF known and respected by decision makers?
- Is UNICEF perceived as objective and trustworthy, or politically partisan?
- Is UNICEF fully compliant with ethical standards of engagement with partners?

### Foundation Area 2 Skills

Advocacy is a skill that combines knowledge, good judgement and creative problem solving. Building skills for advocacy requires organizational commitment to training, capacity building and promoting staff ability to engage with a wide range of people, both within the office and with partners.

5 Adapted from: Sprechmann, Sofia, and Emily Pelton, 'Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting policy change', Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), Atlanta, GA, January 2001, p. 11.

**Elements to consider**

- Does the office have staff with strong core advocacy skills for analysis, research and communication? If not, can it draw on such people from partners or other parts of the organization?
- Do staff members have adequate technical knowledge to develop an advocacy strategy and implement it?
- Is there someone who has the capacity and skills to effectively monitor and evaluate advocacy?

## Foundation Area 3 Intra-office coordination and leadership

Because we are all working for the same goal – positive change for children – everyone in UNICEF is an advocate, even if their job title doesn't include 'advocacy'. However, advocates engage in a variety of related activities; and so advocacy requires strong collaboration between staff members and strong leadership to pave the way forward. Several UNICEF country offices, such as UNICEF Mauritania, have found creative ways of linking and pulling together different sectors/programmatic units to more effectively collect evidence, analyse it, and communicate it to influence decision makers and the public.

**Elements to consider**

- Is there a strong degree of coordination and communication across sectors to work together on a coordinated advocacy strategy?
- Is there strong leadership in the office for advocacy, including support from senior management?
- Does everyone in the office understand their advocacy roles and responsibilities?
- Are mechanisms in place for all staff to be aware of advocacy priorities and messages.

## Foundation Area 4 Capacity to generate and communicate evidence

Evidence for advocacy provides credibility and authority to the organization, allowing us to convince decision makers to support an issue. Data collection, research, analysis, organization and management provide the basis for solid evidence. This evidence, however, must also be interpreted and then communicated at the correct time, to the relevant audiences and in the appropriate manner. That means using the best format – so that the knowledge is clearly communicated, can be absorbed and will have the desired impact.[6]

The evidence needs to highlight the issue, the causes of the issue and the solutions to the issue. Being transparent about methodology, and not overstating the findings, adds to credibility and helps the advocate gain advantages in public argument.[7]

**Elements to consider**

- Are research priorities informed by advocacy strategies, and do they involve colleagues working in communications and other areas?
- Is there capacity for collecting and analysing data, and conducting research towards drawing conclusions that can be addressed by policy changes? If not, is there access to other forms of reliable data and evidence?

6 Cohen, David, 'Essay on Advocacy', *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* Sage Publications (2010).

7 Adapted from: Laws, Sophie, *Research for Development: A practical guide*, Sage Publications, London, 2003

- Are processes in place to assess the potential risks of using different types of evidence? Are there processes to ensure data and evidence (particularly if gathered from a pilot project or another region/country) is applicable in the context in which you are conducting advocacy?
- Is there communications capacity to translate research into shorter, non-technical materials, and to develop multiple messages to reach diverse and pertinent audiences?

## Foundation Area 5 Ability to assess risks

There are risks in conducting advocacy, as well as risks in choosing not to undertake advocacy. Either path can affect UNICEF's, or our partners', credibility and authority; it might also affect the lives of UNICEF's advocacy practitioners and the people involved, including children and women. As an organization, we need to evaluate the risks of conducting advocacy, and the potential gains, versus the risks of not conducting advocacy and the potential losses (For more information, see Chapter 6: Managing Risks in Advocacy).

**Elements to consider**

- Are staff members willing, encouraged and supported in taking calculated risks in advocacy?
- Does the office have effective processes for risk mitigation and risk management?
- Does the office have strong, reliable evidence, internal coordination & leadership, and partnerships (see Foundation Areas 3, 4, 7), which can help minimize risk?
- Is careful consideration given to the long-term and short-term risks and gains, especially with regard to impact on children and women, staff, credibility, funding and strategic objectives?
- Has a vulnerability and capacity analysis been conducted?[8]

## Foundation Area 6 Capacity to work with children and young people

Involving stakeholders in advocacy efforts is essential to align advocacy with UNICEF's human rights-based approach and because the target audience is often accountable to stakeholders. Children are stakeholders in all of UNICEF's advocacy efforts. Advocacy must ensure the concerns of children, as well as parents, caregivers, community members and marginalized groups, are reflected in policy dialogue and decision-making. (For more information, see Chapter 8: Working with Children and Young People in Advocacy)

When supporting children's and young people's participation in advocacy, it is important to work with them to understand the impact they want to achieve, and help them design the steps to get there, the methodologies to use and the roles of all the key actors involved – those they need as allies, those they need to convince and those they can counterbalance if necessary. Children's involvement in advocacy must be based on their ethical and meaningful participation. This means that children's participation in advocacy should be relevant to their particular social and cultural context, and based on their evolving maturity and abilities.[9]

8 For more information on vulnerability and capacity analysis, see: United Nations Children's Fund, *Programme Policies and Procedures Manual*, UNICEF, New York, 2007 p. 158.

9 Adapted from: Bhandari, Neha, 'One Vision One Voice: Good practices in advocacy to end violence against children', Save the Children.

**Elements to consider**[10]

- Do staff and managers understand what meaningful, ethical and safe participation by children and young people entails?
- Are children and young people able to express any views or anxieties they may have, and have them constructively addressed?
- Are staff members provided with appropriate training, tools and other development opportunities to create and experience meaningful participation in advocacy?
- Are staff properly supported, supervised and evaluated in their children's and young people's participation practice?
- Is there support for staff when children's and young people's participation represents a significant personal or cultural change so that it does not become a barrier or an excuse to ignore this crucial participation?
- Do relations between individual staff, and between staff and management, model appropriate consultative and participatory behaviour, treating each other with respect and honesty?
- Are staff oriented, and do they know how to orient governments and partners, to use the Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment no. 12 – the right of the child to be heard[11] – so that meaningful participation is promoted and advanced?

SPECIAL FOCUS

### Involving civil society groups as agents of change in advocacy

Successful advocacy efforts do not just solve immediate problems, they can help transform the relationship between government and civil society from distrust and power struggle to partnership and cooperation. By making the voices of civil society heard in an open and transparent manner, advocacy can ensure that policy dialogue and decision-making is informed by the perspectives, concerns and voices of children, women and men, including those who are often forgotten and marginalized.

## Foundation Area 7 Partners and networks that form a broad base for advocacy

The ability to build relationships – personal, public and institutional – is very important for effective advocacy. Good relationships allow organizations to reach target audiences, or overcome gaps by connecting with influential 'secondary' audiences, as well as generating critical mass behind the causes and issues that advance the rights of children and women.

Building such relationships requires understanding the dynamics of power and having the capacity to engage audiences through multiple platforms and forums. As a relationship is nurtured, people will respond and provide support to you, but you should also be prepared to respond in a timely and diligent way. Reciprocity, responsiveness and responsibility strengthens, builds and sustains partnerships.

10 Based on input from Ravi Karkara, Child and Adolescent Participation Specialist, Division of Policy and Practice, UNICEF New York

11 United Nations, CRC/C/GC/12, 20 July 2009. All General Comments are available in multiple languages at www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm.

**Elements to consider**

- How strong is engagement with ministries of social affairs, health and education?
- How strong is engagement with ministries of planning, finance and economic development?
- How strong is engagement with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and/or other international financial institutions?
- For country offices, how strong is participation in the Common Country Assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)?
- How strong is engagement with children's and young people's organizations?
- How strong is engagement with domestic NGOs, think tanks and universities to generate evidence?
- How strong is engagement with the private sector?
- Is the office a member of any coalitions, alliances or networks? If so, does it engage in a leading role on issues that affect children?

## Foundation Area 8 Sufficient resources

Advocacy is resource intensive. It requires investments of funds, staff time and materials over an extended period of time. Resource availability often changes the shape of an advocacy strategy and how it is planned. Therefore, it is essential to know the likelihood of what resources will be available for an advocacy issue at the outset.

**Elements to consider**

- Are there adequate resources – financial, time, skills, knowledge – for advocacy?
- Are efforts under way to mobilize additional resources, both financial and non-financial, through donors, individual supporters or the private sector?
- Are there efforts to show how resources for advocacy could yield substantially larger gains than the cost in money and time?
- Can advocacy objectives be integrated, for example, combining health, education and child protection?

# 3

# Developing an Advocacy Strategy

**“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”** *– Lao-tzu*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2009-1472/Kate Holt

# 3 Developing an Advocacy Strategy

**Creating an advocacy plan helps to understand the situation, stakeholders and their relative power, and how change happens; identify target audiences, the right messages, and the right messenger to deliver the message; identify processes, opportunities and entry points; recognise capacity and gaps; and finally set goals and interim outcomes, develop an action plan, and monitor and evaluate results.**

**Chapter 3 covers following Nine Questions for planning your strategy and provides tools and guidance to help you find the answers:**

**What do we want?**
**Who can make it happen?**
**What do they need to hear?**
**Who do they need to hear it from?**
**How can we make sure they hear it?**
**What do we have?**
**What do we need?**
**How do we begin to take action?**
**How can we tell if it's working?**

## 3.1 Why develop an advocacy strategy?

Strategic advocacy is the backbone of effective advocacy. It is a disciplined effort to generate fundamental decisions and actions that guide an organization and shape its course for a specific issue.[1] Planning is indispensable, and following are some of the reasons why:

- Planning helps put resources (time, funds, skills) to their most effective use.
- Planning helps minimize risks and maximize opportunities for advocacy.
- Planning helps advocates navigate the complex, dynamic and diverse environments in which UNICEF operates.
- Planning helps align advocacy with other areas of work and organizational goals, both long term and short term.

**Keep in mind** Being strategic in advocacy is essential because it makes advocacy effective.

1 Advocacy Institute, Washington

Developing an advocacy strategy entails figuring out how to reach interim outcomes while keeping the long-term vision alive. A good strategy can be applied to a quick initiative or a long-term programme, but it always creates opportunities to advance efforts and protect gains.

Strategy planning is further strengthened by the Foundation Areas in Chapter 2. Maintaining and strengthening these Foundation Areas must continue throughout advocacy planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Broad aspects to consider in shaping an advocacy strategy

When you're shaping a strategy for advocacy, the key elements will shift for different issues in different locations. The basics to review are:

**Context:** Every political environment is different. Each presents its own opportunities and constraints. Governments have varying degrees of legitimacy and power vis-à-vis civil society, the private sector, transnational and international organizations and institutions. Political decisions are made differently depending on the nature of the state, politics, media and strength of civil society. In some places, the legislature has more authority. In others, the Minister of Finance dominates policymaking.

Countries have different levels of freedom and access to the public sector. People use these opportunities differently depending on literacy, poverty and social relationships. A society's culture, religion, ethnicity, race and economic development affect the level of tolerance and openness to social change. In some countries, advocacy at the local or the international level may be more feasible than at the national level.

**Timing:** Each moment in history presents distinct political opportunities and constraints. International economic trends may make a country tighten or expand political space. Elections or international conferences may provide opportunities to raise controversial issues. At some moments, a march or demonstration will draw attention to an issue. At others, a march may provoke repression.

**Organization:** In designing your strategy, it is important to be aware of the comparative strengths and weaknesses of UNICEF. How broad and strong is your potential support? Do you have well-placed allies? Is there a strong sense of common purpose among the leadership? Is decision-making efficient and responsive? What resources can you rely on? Are your aims clear and achievable? Can you draw on organizational history for learning and inspiration? Are advocates and participants open to viewing initiatives that didn't succeed as valued opportunities for learning? Are there stories that can be used within the specific organization and in the wider UNICEF community?

**Risk:** Not all advocacy strategies can be used universally. In some places, a direct action aimed to reach a key decision-maker may be politically dangerous, or may weaken or reduce the potential for long-term change. In some countries, pushing for change that affects cultural beliefs may provoke a harsh backlash. Sometimes involving individuals who are usually excluded, like children and women, may cause family, social and community conflict.

Challenging relationships that affect power dynamics will more likely than not generate conflict. Organizers have a primary responsibility to find ways to navigate through opposition without taking on undue risk. In more closed environments, advocacy often takes the form of community action around basic needs and is not publicly referred to as 'political' advocacy. Whatever the context, sometimes risks need to be taken because there are no other options. In these cases, everyone involved must understand the potential risks.

Adapted from Miller, Valerie, *NGOs and Grassroots Policy Influence: What is Success?*, Institute for Development Research, Vol. 11, No. 5, 1994. See: Lisa VeneKlasen with Valerie Miller 'A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation' Chapter 10, 2007

## 3.2 Nine questions for strategic advocacy

Developed by Jim Schultz, founder and executive director of The Democracy Center, this set of questions has been used in planning advocacy around the world in all sorts of situations and contexts, and has been adapted here to UNICEF's context. Answering these questions leads to concrete approaches for advocacy. The questions can be used for both long-term planning and to develop specific advocacy initiatives. The first five questions help in assessing the external advocacy environment, and the second four assess the internal advocacy environment and what needs to be done to begin action.

The Nine Questions[2] for strategic advocacy and tools to help you answer them are:

**Question 1. What do we want?**
*To understand the situation ...*
Tool 1. Developing a problem and solutions tree
Tool 2. Planning research
Tool 3. Generating an evidence base
Tool 4. Choosing advocacy priorities

**Question 2. Who can make it happen?**
*To understand stakeholders, their relative power and how change happens ...*
Tool 5. Mapping stakeholders' interests, influence and importance
Tool 6. Mapping stakeholders' relative power
Tool 7. Mapping targets

**Question 3. What do they need to hear?**
*To reach a specific audience ...*
Tool 8. Developing evidence-based messages

**Question 4. Who do they need to hear it from?**
*To Identify the right messenger for your audience...*
Tool 9. Choosing messengers strategically

**Question 5. How can we make sure they hear it?**
*To identify processes, opportunities and entry points ...*
Tool 10. Choosing the best channels to deliver your message
Tool 11. Identifying and planning opportunities
Tool 12. Lobbying
Tool 13. Negotiating

**Keep in mind** There is more than one way to approach advocacy, and depending on the context and issue, some of the nine questions will be more applicable to a specific strategy than others. The nine questions are interrelated, and answering one will likely inform others.

**Question 6. What do we have?** **Question 7. What do we need?**
*To recognize capacities and gaps ...*
Tool 14. Advantages, challenges, threats, opportunities, next steps: the ACT-ON model for assessing internal advocacy capacity

**Question 8. How do we begin to take action?**
*To set goals and interim outcomes and develop an action plan ...*
Tool 15. Being SMART
Tool 16. Advocacy action planning

**Question 9. How do we tell if it's working?**
*To monitor and evaluate advocacy ...*
Tool 17. Using 'logical frameworks' to plan advocacy action

Following the Nine Questions, please see the **Advocacy Strategy Planning Worksheet** (Tool 18) to keep track of your answers to each of the Nine Questions, and to provide comprehensive summary that can be used in strategy formulation.

2 For more information see: Schultz, Jim. *The Democracy Owners' Manual: A Practical Guide to Changing the World.* Rutgers University Press. New Brunswick, New Jersey and London. 2002

Asking questions is typically a lot easier than answering them. The tools and guidance in this section will give you a foundation, even if deeper analysis in some areas might be necessary. Ideally, everyone in the office should be involved in answering the questions and developing a summary of the results.

## Question 1. What do we want?

Every advocacy effort must begin here: What do we want the advocacy to achieve? To answer this, we need to understand the problems, issues and solutions. Among these solutions, or results, some distinctions are important. You will need to determine: long-term goals and interim outcomes; content outcomes, for example, policy change; and process outcomes, for example, building community and trust among participants. These goals and outcomes may be difficult to establish, but defining them at the outset will draw support to the advocacy initiative, set up an effective launch and make it more sustainable over time.[2]

Knowing what we want involves analysing the situation, generating evidence and choosing priorities to identify possible areas for advocacy.

**Keep in mind** It is important to analyse the equity dimension when conducting the situation analysis. Who are the most vulnerable and excluded, and why? What changes are needed to address the needs of the most vulnerable and excluded?

**Keep in mind** Causality is the relationship between cause and effect. The more specific the causality analysis of a problem, the more useful it is in identifying all interventions that are necessary and sufficient to achieve the planned results. Only a complete analysis of the causes will ensure that development partners can identify their mutually supporting roles.*

### Analysing the situation

*The situation analysis* is the first step in identifying areas of action, forming the foundation for any programme or advocacy plan.[3] It uncovers the problem that needs to be addressed, and looks at the ways it can be solved – encompassing a thorough understanding of child rights, inequality in a particular country or area, the internal and external advocacy environment, and the political landscape and policy environment. By creating a solid evidence base, the situation analysis provides a starting point for setting advocacy priorities and a baseline against which to measure progress.

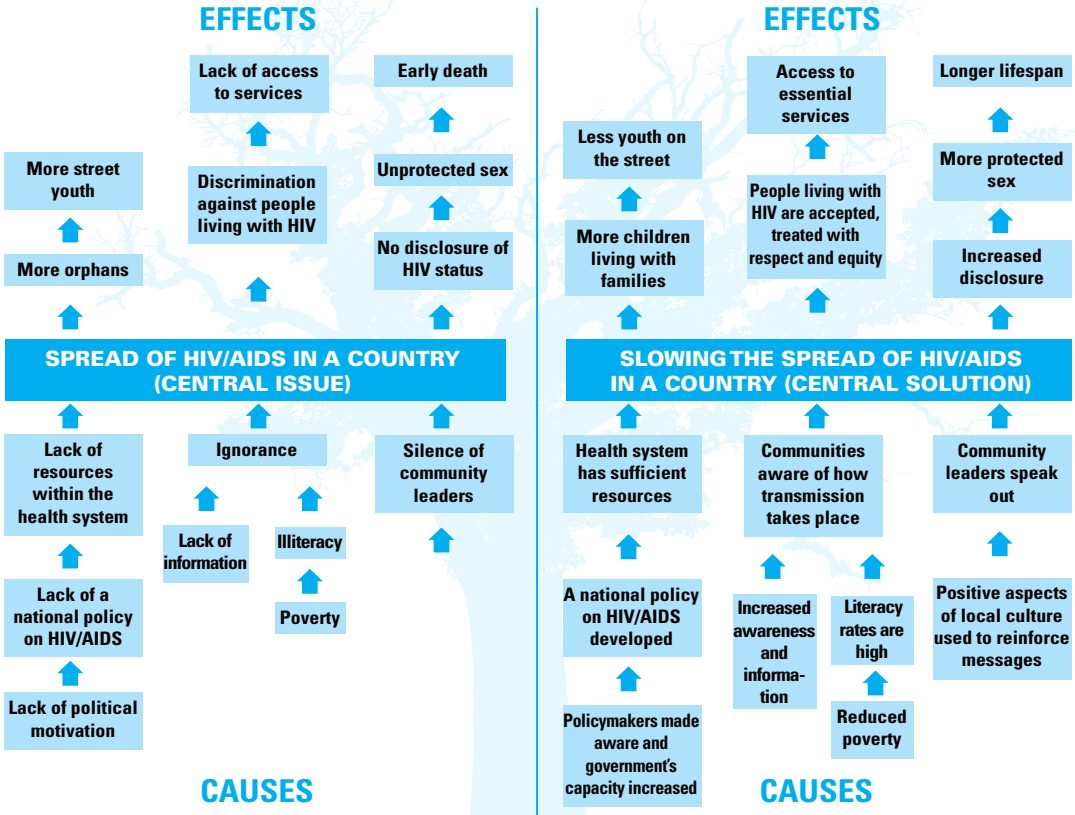
A 'problem and solution tree' is a particularly useful tool for conducting a situation analysis because it offers a visual structure to analyse the problem and solution. The *problem tree* will help advocates understand the immediate, underlying and root causes of the issue, as well as help in gathering information to support the analysis. The *solution tree* then provides a visual structure of the solutions and how they can affect change.

An example of these trees, using the spread of HIV/AIDS as the central issue, appears below. These examples provide an understanding of how the tool can be used, but they are by no means a complete analysis, because there would clearly be other causes and effects, and more links between solutions. Instructions for creating a problem and solutions tree appear after the chart.

* See PPPM, page 69 for details on conducting a causality analysis.

2 Adapted from Jim Schultz, Strategy Development: Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy, http://www.democracyctr.org/advocacy/strategy.htm

3 For advice on situation analysis, see: United Nations Children's Fund, *Programme Policies and Procedures Manual*, UNICEF, New York.




## TOOL 1. Developing a problem and solutions tree

**To create a problem tree:**

1. Begin by drawing a flow chart, as shown above, by placing the main issue in the centre.
2. Brainstorm to determine a list of *causes* and *consequences or effects*; list consequences above the central issue and causes below it.
3. List as many causes of the problem you can think of. Draw arrows from the causes to the central issue. While listing each cause, brainstorm on the 'cause' of the 'cause'. Link all of these by arrows to show their connection. For example, a cause for spread of HIV/AIDS may be ignorance, the cause for ignorance could be illiteracy, and the cause for illiteracy could be poverty.
4. Next, write the effects, or the consequences of the problem, above the central issue box. Draw an arrow from the central problem to the effect. For each effect, ask what further effect it could have. For example, an effect for spread of HIV/AIDS could be a greater number of orphans, the effect of more orphans could be more children in the street, and the effect of more street children could mean more gang violence.
5. Identify the most vulnerable and excluded, and consider how they are affected by the issue.
6. After the brainstorming is complete, look at the causes again and highlight those that could be changed or improved with the help of influential people or institutions through advocacy.

**Now turn the problem tree into a solutions tree:**

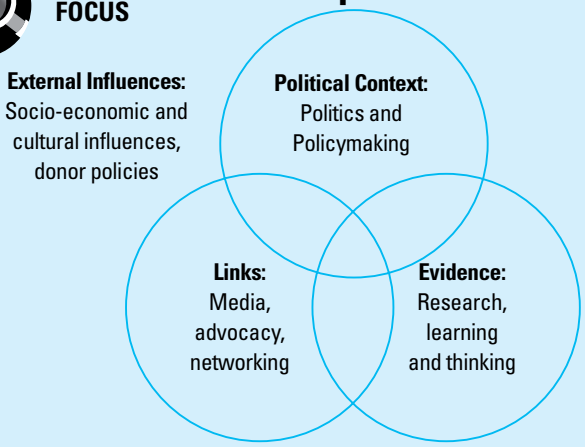
One way to identify solutions is to reverse the causes and consequences of the issue. For example, if the cause is 'silence of community leaders increases spread of HIV/AIDS', then a possible solution will be 'to get community leaders to publicly spread information about HIV/AIDS'. If the effect is 'there are more orphans as a result of the spread of HIV/AIDS', then the solution would be 'to have more children living with their families'. Particular consideration to the solutions which address the most vulnerable and excluded should be made.

**Keep in mind** Developing evidence with partners often helps generate ownership of the issue. This is especially important when partners are also a target audience for advocacy. Additionally, generating evidence with partners can help to share some of the costs, provide expertise in areas that UNICEF might not have, and provide the basis for a stronger relationship.

Although this topic will be further developed later in this chapter, it is useful, to start thinking now about how the issue relates to the policymaking environment. The RAPID framework, developed by the Overseas Development Institute, considers the political context, the evidence and how it is communicated, and the linkages between the actors involved to understand why some research is more effectively translated into policy change more than other research.

SPECIAL FOCUS

### The ODI Rapid Framework




Source: ODI (2004) *Bridging Research and Policy in International Development: An analytical and practical framework.* Briefing Paper. http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/159.pdf [Last accessed September 9th, 2010]

## Generating evidence

A good evidence base is essential for successful advocacy. Evidence provides legitimacy to the advocate and supports many stages of advocacy planning. Evidence for advocacy is created by gathering information from primary and secondary sources and then analysing it in a way that illustrates the problem and narrates the solutions. Gathering data is a continuous activity during planning – essential to selecting issues, developing objectives, forming messages, building partnerships, and monitoring and evaluating the progress.

### TOOL 2. Planning research

| Topic/ research question | Sub-topic/ research question | Where can you find the information? | Who will contribute to the research? | How will you collect and analyze the information? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Adapted from: WaterAid (2007) *'The Advocacy Sourcebook'* London.

### TOOL 3. Generating an evidence base

Following are areas to consider when generating evidence. Answering these questions can help make your evidence a well-rounded package:

- Is the evidence grounded in solid research conducted by experts?
- Does the evidence highlight the causes of a problem?
- Does the evidence provide convincing solutions to the problem?
- Does the evidence consider inequities, disparities, vulnerability and marginalization?
- Is the evidence complemented with qualitative analysis when it is quantitative, and vice versa?
- Is the evidence complemented with human interest stories or experiences that highlight the human and personal dimensions of the problem?
- Can the evidence be easily disseminated?
- Particularly if the evidence is gathered through pilot projects, what are the risks associated with using the evidence for advocacy in wider contexts and/or different environments? Is the evidence applicable in these wider contexts or different environments?
- Is the evidence timely?

CASE STUDY

## Sample research planning matrix

Examining the historical trend in Water Supply and Sanitation financing from national revenues'[1]

| Topic/ research question | Sub-topic/ research question | Where can you find the information? | Who will contribute to the research? | How will you collect and analyse the information? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Quantity of Water Supply and Sanitation sector financing** | | | | |
| **What is the historical trend in Water Supply and Sanitation financing from national revenues?** | How much was allocated by national government to Water Supply and Sanitation sector in FY 1990/91 – 2002/03? | National budgets over 1990/91 to 2002/03 | Person(s) | Literature review |
| | What are the different items under Water Supply and Sanitation that were included in the budget? | National budgets as above<br><br>Informants from Budget office or Water ministry | Person(s) | Literature review<br><br>Key informant interviews (have to identify who key informants are)<br><br>(Either notes or recorded interviews, transcribed)<br><br>Possible email interview |
| | What of the budgets allocated to Water Supply and Sanitation were actually disbursed (1990/91 – 2002/03)? | Expenditure reports from water ministry, or finance ministry<br><br>Informants from finance/ budget and/or water offices | Person(s) | Literature review<br><br>Key informant interviews<br><br>Possible email interview |
| | What is the pattern of national allocations to Water Supply and Sanitation? | Analysis of data gathered<br><br>Informants from finance/ budget and/or water offices | Person(s) | Data collection and comparisons, synthesis to facilitate analysis |
| **What is the current level of total financing for the Water Supply and Sanitation sector?** | Apart from government (national revenues), what other donors finance Water Supply and Sanitation service provision and sector governance? Check available data 1990/91 – 2002/03 | National budget?<br><br>Ministry budget<br><br>Donor reports<br><br>Ministry reports, national budget reports | Person(s) | Literature review<br><br>Water ministry key informative interviews |
| | In what form is donor financing provided? Grants or concessional loans or technical cooperation? | Water ministry budget reports, finance ministry reports, donor reports<br><br>Other independent reports from academic research<br><br>Informants from donors/ research | Person(s) | Literature review<br><br>Key informant interviews with donors |
| | What do donors fund? | As above | Person(s) | As above |

1 Adapted from: WaterAid (2007) '*The Advocacy Sourcebook*' London.

CASE STUDY

## Sample research planning matrix *cont.*

| Topic/ research question | Sub-topic/ research question | Where can you find the information? | Who will contribute to the research? | How will you collect and analyse the information? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Effectiveness of Water Supply and Sanitation sector financing** | | | | |
| **How do financial allocations to the sector flow from allocations and disbursement and expenditure? (once the budget is allocated, how is that finance disbursed, and how is the expenditure reported on?)** | What is the decision-making process and who are the agencies/ individuals involved in agreeing allocations, disbursements and actual expenditure on national budget allocations? | Literature reviews<br><br>Informants from different sections of government: finance, budget/ planning, water, local government or utility | Person(s) | Case study on basis of one year's performance |
| | What is the decision-making process and who are the agencies/ individuals involved in agreeing allocations, disbursements and actual expenditure on external aid to Water Supply and Sanitation? | Literature review<br><br>Informants in donor community and water ministry, local water agency | Person(s) | Case study of one donor's performance on one funded project, perhaps one year in that project<br><br>Analysis of flow |
| | What blockages in the flow of resources exist and at what level? | Data gathered<br><br>Informants within government and donors academe | Person(s) | Analysis of data gathered as part of case study<br><br>Interviews |
| | What are the different perceptions on how to unblock the bottle-necks? | Informants from donor community, academia, government – finance, planning, water agency, local government | Person(s) | Informant interviews<br><br>Research or academic reports literature review<br><br>Possible survey |
| **What is the pattern of Water Supply and Sanitation spending allocated to addressing service sustainability?** | How do service providers and policy makers define service sustainability in urban and rural Water Supply and Sanitation services? | Informants<br><br>Policy papers and strategies of government, donors | Person(s) | Literature review/ analysis<br><br>Possible survey of informants |
| | How much is being spent from national budgets and aid to address service sustainability of rural services? (focused on technical, management sustainability of service) | Budget data<br><br>Evaluation reports<br><br>Project reports<br><br>Research or other academic papers<br><br>Informants in local government water agencies | Person(s) | Literature review<br><br>Interviews |
| | What needs to change to ensure sustainability is addressed in sector spending? | Informants<br><br>Evaluation reports<br><br>Research reports | Person(s) | Interviews<br><br>Literature review |

CASE STUDY

## Evidence-based advocacy around the world

**Assessing birth registration in Indonesia:** UNICEF Indonesia undertook a survey to assess national levels of birth registration. The evidence generated from the survey informed UNICEF's advocacy towards successful drafting and adoption of the National Law on Population Administration, which includes birth registration, in 2006; the adoption of local laws and regulations on birth registration in UNICEF-supported districts, from 2002 to date; and the adoption of a national strategy on birth registration in 2008.*

**Mapping policies and practices in Georgia:** UNICEF Georgia's successful high-level advocacy efforts were designed to establish a child-friendly juvenile justice system and were based on context-specific research and mapping national policy and practices to the level of compatibility with international standards. This research was used by civil society organizations (CSOs), the media and the ombudsman's office to help make the necessary changes.**

**Using research creatively in Viet Nam:** In 2008, UNICEF Viet Nam and partners launched an initiative to publicize the results of the country's first nationwide family survey. In addition to the typical report and presentations, survey results were presented in an attention-grabbing film. The visual images grabbed attention and UNICEF successfully managed to communicate the key findings from the survey. The research provided timely evidence for the Government to formulate policies, particularly those related to laws on gender equality and prevention of domestic violence. The data and analysis provided a baseline against which to monitor ongoing changes in the lives of Vietnamese families.

The data generated by the survey were disaggregated by region, ethnicity, income, age and other variables – and can be used as scientific and practical basis for creating policies that support families.†

**Global in-depth study on violence against children used as a tool for advocacy:** Despite the fact that governments across the world agreed to protect children from all forms of violence when they signed the CRC, children's own stories and research from many different sources continued to refer to widespread violence against children. In 2003, the UN General Assembly mandated the Secretary-General to undertake the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children. The Secretary-General appointed Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro as the independent expert, who worked closely with UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

For each type of violence, the study reviewed causes, associated risks and protective factors. In this way, it generated detailed and crucial evidence for advocacy. Its focus is on prevention strategies, in particular through identification of best practices in prevention, including those designed by children. The study has led to landmark recommendations, such as the establishment of national child protection systems and setting up protective social practices.

In 2006, the results were published in the *World Report on Violence against Children*. The report serves as a key advocacy tool, used by UNICEF and other child rights organizations to create, change and implement national policies for child protection.††

* Information collected through UNICEF Policy Advocacy Community of Practice discussions.

** Information collected through UNICEF Policy Advocacy Community of Practice discussions.

† UNICEF Viet Nam, 'Family Undergoing Major Shifts in Viet Nam, Shows First-Ever Nationwide Survey on the Family', UNICEF, Ha Noi, 26 June 2008, www.unicef.org/Viet Nam/media_8571.html, accessed 20 June 2010.

†† For more information on the study and the report, see www.unviolencestudy.org.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities

UNICEF initiated the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities at the end of 2007, with the purpose of bringing a voice to the world's most vulnerable children, and to leverage evidence, analysis, policy and partnerships to promote gender equality and deliver equitable results for children. The Global Study was started in thirty-nine countries and has since spurred further interest: as of 2010, 50 countries participate in the initiative. The Study adopts a multidimensional approach to child poverty, looking at how children are deprived in eight critical dimensions: nutrition, education, health, shelter, sanitation, safe drinking water, information, as well as looking at the effects of income poverty (visit www.unicef-globalstudy.blogspot.com for further information on the Study).

**The centrality of national ownership**

The Study methodology emphasizes national ownership and capacity development, and in order to achieve that objective the following elements were identified by participating countries:

- From the onset the study needs to be conducted in a participatory manner. A study solely developed by a research team without much wider consultation is not likely to reap benefits; it is essential to include policy-makers and stakeholders in the process. This increases the relevance of the study recommendations.
- Buy-in from relevant line ministries from the beginning of the study is essential, including a key focal point within each ministry. Emphasis on adapting the study to the country context, this may involve modifying the specific guidance suggested in the Global Study Guide, including the deprivation thresholds, the statistical template and the policy template, prioritization of issues, etc..
- A technical committee/steering committee composed of the key stakeholders needs to be involved throughout the process, not only for review and endorsement of a final product but regularly meet and review progress made
- The composition and reputation of the research team driving the study is a key factor.*

National ownership is a very important part of advocacy for a variety of reasons. National ownership is the process of engaging citizens on an issue, through a process of building their capabilities to analyse evidence, explore alternatives and ultimately become advocates for change themselves. National ownership enhances government–stakeholder dialogue, allowing for freer exchanging of views and ideas. Engaging national partners and target audiences early on, particularly during data analysis stages, will help generate strong commitment in the advocacy process to follow. National ownership can also help make national partners and target audiences more confident in, and accountable to, the data and evidence. Ultimately, national ownership is part of a participative process to generate a shared vision, understanding of the objectives and transparency, enhancing prospects for sustainability of outcomes.

The centrality of national ownership is evident in Thailand where the Study is fully owned by the Government, within the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB). From the onset of the Study, NESDB senior official encouraged staff to actively participate in the study as an opportunity to build capacity for improving their research skills and enhancing their knowledge on child and youth issues. Focus group meetings were organized by NESDB with participation of representatives from key government agencies, academia, NGOs and youth groups, where they brainstormed and made recommendations regarding the selection of plans and programmes relevant to child and youth development. The report findings were then shared in a participatory manner, where high-profile

* 2010 Progress Survey for participating Global Study Teams

## The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities *cont.*

officials in relevant ministries, academics, and youth groups provided comments on the findings which were then included in the final report.

**Study findings: advocacy tools to influence policy**

The Study findings have provided compelling evidence underscoring the need to measure child poverty using a multidimensional approach. The main findings of the Morocco Child Poverty Study were disseminated in the first Social Policy and Child Rights Forum in the country, marking a shift in the national debate on child poverty in Morocco. Following the Forum, discussions continued regarding the use of official data and how to apply it in order to influence policy development in favour of Moroccan children. As a result of the Study, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in early 2010 between the High Commission for Planning, UNICEF and the National Observatory for Children's Rights to start incorporating child poverty estimates and undertaking analyses in their national system.*

The Study has also thus far motivated several important policy interventions. In Mali, the Study and other analytical work at the country level inspired the first national forum on poverty which led to the formulation of an action plan on social protection. In several of the participating countries the evidence emerging from the studies has provided a good opportunity to highlight the gaps in the attainment of child rights, as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as inputs into national development plans. In Cameroon, the findings from the Cameroon Study have been reflected in the Government's Growth and Employment Strategy Paper for 2010-2020.

**Qualitative research: enhancing advocacy relevance of child poverty studies**

A number of the participating countries conducted qualitative research to add yet another layer of understanding on child poverty; as such studies can provide strong advocacy messages that can go far in shaping the views for action on child rights and provide children with a voice on the issue of poverty. The child poverty study team in Kosovo carried out a qualitative study using focus group discussions. At the heart of their findings were children's clear recognition that poverty is damaging, both personally and socially. There was also an acute awareness that some minority children have experiences that dramatically contrast with those of other children:

"Sometimes poor children don't know how to write while the rich ones know how to write. Children who don't know how to write are yelled at by the teacher. The teacher beats them with a stick. There are cases when the teacher throws pupils out of class when they did not know how to write, and tell them not to come back without their parents"

*9 year old Ashkali boy***

**Communities of Practice: The Child Poverty Network**

The Child Poverty Network (http://sites.google.com/site/whatisthechildpovertynetwork) was launched in October 2008 with the main purpose of exchanging comparative experiences, good practices and lessons learned related to the process of undertaking the Global Study in the global, regional and national contexts. The network has proved an active platform for exchange of advocacy experiences around the child poverty studies. The consolidated reply for an advocacy query posted by the United Republic of Tanzania child poverty study team in December 2008 as well as an advocacy query and responses posted by the Egypt team in March 2010 can be found at the Child Poverty Network Site.

* UNICEF (2010) The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities blog, www.unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com, Morocco: Institutionalizing Child Poverty Measurement for Long-Term Impact on Children's Lives.

** UNICEF (2009) Child Poverty Network Consolidated Reply – Undertaking Qualitative Research as Part of the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities, http://sites.google.com/site/whatisthechildpovertynetwork/

## Choosing priorities

Sometimes the situation analysis will identify many issues that could be addressed through advocacy. However, choosing just a few is necessary to ensure focus and meet the realities of context and resources. The exact number of issues chosen will depend on the size and capacity of the office, as well as type of issues and the environment the office is operating in. If there are many issues, it is also usually very helpful to have issues grouped under broader themes, or even under a single theme.

**Keep in mind** While it would be ideal to advocate on all the issues identified, choosing just a few will help ensure focus and success. Above all, it is important to select an issue that is realistic and will benefit children as a result of the advocacy.

Tool 4 offers guidelines to help select advocacy priorities. It should be noted that these are only guidelines to help – each UNICEF office might have additional criteria and/or might weight the criteria differently.

### TOOL 4. Choosing advocacy priorities

| Criteria for prioritizing issues | Does it meet the criteria? | Comment |
|---|---|---|
| **Importance of Issue** | | |
| Does it result in a real improvement in children's lives? | | |
| Does it address underlying problems? | | |
| Does it address the most vulnerable and excluded? | | |
| Is the issue widely felt? | | |
| Is the issue deeply felt? | | |
| Is it a priority expressed by young people? | | |
| **Practical considerations** | | |
| Is it winnable? | | |
| Is it easy to communicate and understand? | | |
| Are there opportunities for children and young people to engage with the issue? | | |
| Are there clear decision makers who can make the change happen? | | |
| Does it have a clear time frame? | | |
| Does addressing the issue build accountable leadership? | | |

**TOOL 4.** ***cont.***

| Criteria for prioritizing issues | Does it meet the criteria? | Comment |
|---|---|---|
| Are there opportunities/entry points to influence policies? | | |
| Are there resources for advocating on the issue? | | |
| Is the analysis of the issue grounded in solid evidence and expertise? | | |
| Is there pre-existing momentum on addressing the issue? | | |
| Can UNICEF add comparative value to addressing the issue? | | |
| Are there partnership possibilities in advocating on the issue? | | |
| Does it link local issues to global issues and macro-policy context? | | |
| **Organizational support** | | |
| Is it consistent with global priorities such as the CRC and the MDGs? | | |
| Is there continuity with an existing long-term strategy? | | |
| Are governments and/or policymakers keen for change on the issue? | | |
| Is it consistent with UNICEF's mission and our medium-term strategic plan? | | |
| In the case of country offices, is it consistent with the UNDAF, the Country Programme Document and the Country Programme Action Plan? | | |
| In case of national committees, is it consistent with the Joint Strategic Plan? | | |
| Does it help raise UNICEF's profile and strategic position? | | |
| Is there synergy with fund-raising schemes? | | |

In no particular order. Based on the 'Rome Criteria' identified in the workshop for UNICEF national committees, 'Planning Advocacy and Education for Development Work', 2008; Bobo, Kimberly A., *Organizing for Social Change: A manual for activists in the 1990s,* Seven Locks Press, , 1991, and Veneklasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation,* Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002, Additional criteria were selected by David Cohen and Neha Bhandari.

## Question 2. Who can make it happen?

Once we know what we want, it is necessary to understand the people and institutions we need to move to make it happen. This includes those who have formal authority to deliver the goods (legislators, for example) and 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, effective advocacy requires a clear sense of who these audiences are and what access or pressure points are available to move them.[4]

Knowing who can make it happen involves analysing stakeholders and power, identifying key targets, and understanding how they can make it happen.

## Analysing stakeholders and power

A stakeholder analysis provides a sense of which institutions and individuals have a stake in an issue, as well as their interests, support or opposition, influence and importance. Finding where stakeholders stand on the issue can shield advocacy initiatives from surprises and false assumptions. A stakeholder analysis also provides information necessary for later steps, including developing partnerships, and the identification of target audiences and those who influence them.

**Keep in mind** Analysis should also be undertaken between and within institutions. It may not be easy to convert an institution to support an issue that it is actively resistant towards, but it is often possible to bring individuals from the institution on board who can help move the issue forward, or make the institution passively oppose rather than actively oppose the issue.

To gather information for the stakeholder analysis, various methods can be employed, such as undertaking community mapping, surveys, and interviews with primary stakeholders and collaborating organizations such as NGOs. Organizing stakeholder workshops and informal consultations of stakeholders through household visits are other possible methods.

A stakeholder and power analysis can be broken into five activities:[5]

**1. Identification of stakeholders (individuals, groups and institutions).**

- Who is likely to gain from the proposed changes?
- Who might be adversely affected?
- Who has the power to make the changes happen?
- Who complains about the issue?
- Who are the vulnerable groups that may be affected by the project?
- Who are primary stakeholder and who are secondary stakeholders with regards to the issue? Who are the rights holders and who are the duty bearers?
- What are the relationships between the individuals, groups and institutions listed in the questions above?

4 Adapted from Jim Schultz, *Strategy Development: Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy*. www.democracyctr.org/advocacy/strategy.htm

5 Adapted from: Train-Sea-Coast GPA, 'Stakeholder Analysis', www.training.gpa.unep.org/content.html?id=109, accessed 20 June 2010.

**2. Assessment of stakeholders' interests.** Once the key stakeholders have been identified, the interest these groups or individuals may have in the issue can be considered:

- What are the stakeholders' expectations of the project?
- What benefits are likely to result from the project for the stakeholders?
- What resources might the stakeholders be able and willing to mobilize?
- What stakeholder interests conflict with project goals?

**3. Assessment of stakeholder support or opposition to the issue.** To assess the stakeholder's support or opposition to an issue:

- Does the stakeholder publicly support or oppose the issue?
- Is the public support or opposition different from private support or opposition?
- Who else is the stakeholder allied to and opposed to? Does that shed additional light on the stakeholder's support or opposition to the issue?
- What has the previous position been on similar issues?
- Has the stakeholder's position changed over time? If yes, how?

**Keep in mind *Primary vs. secondary stakeholders***

Using the case of children's education in an emergency situation as an example: The primary stakeholders – those who are directly affected, either positively or negatively, by the project – would include the children, their families and communities. The secondary stakeholders – those who play an intermediate role between end-users and local government and may have an important effect on the project outcome – would include local governments, donors, NGOs, education management boards and funding agencies.

**4. Assessment of stakeholder influence.** To assess the influence of a stakeholder, advocacy planners should know:

- What is the political, social and economic power and status of the stakeholder?
- How well is the stakeholder organized?
- What control does the stakeholder have over strategic resources?
- What level of informal influence does the stakeholder have?

**5. Assessment of stakeholder importance.** Although the stakeholders' importance and their influence over an issue might seem similar, they are actually very different. Degree of influence reflects the direct power a stakeholder has to influence change. Importance, on the other hand, reflects the necessity to engage that stakeholder in order to address the underlying causes of a problem and achieve sustainable change. Analysis of importance is very much consistent with a rights-based approach. For example, while children are not always very influential in policy discussions, it is very important that they are part of them.

- Does the issue compromise the stakeholder's rights, and does the stakeholder have a right to solutions for the issue? Is the stakeholder a rights holder?
- Will stakeholder engagement help address deeper underlying causes to the problem, so that solutions can be sustainable in the future?

Tool 5 suggests a matrix for summarizing the different stakeholders, their interests, and their influence and importance. You can use information collected from the above five questions on stakeholder and power analysis to fill in the blanks.

## TOOL 5. Mapping stakeholders' interests, influence and importance

| | Stakeholder 1 | Stakeholder 2 | Stakeholder 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Stakeholder** *(stakeholder name)* | | | |
| **Stakeholder's interest in the issue** *(state stakeholders interests, as well as whether they are primary or secondary stakeholders, and duty bearer and/or rights holders)* | | | |
| **Stakeholder's level of opposition to or support for the issue** *(strong ally, medium ally, neutral, medium opponent, strong opponent)* | | | |
| **Stakeholder's influence over the issue** *(unknown, no influence, some influence, moderate influence, significant influence, very influential)* | | | |
| **Importance of stakeholder's engagement** *(unknown, no importance, some importance, moderate importance, very important, critical player)* | | | |

## TOOL 6. Mapping stakeholders' relative power

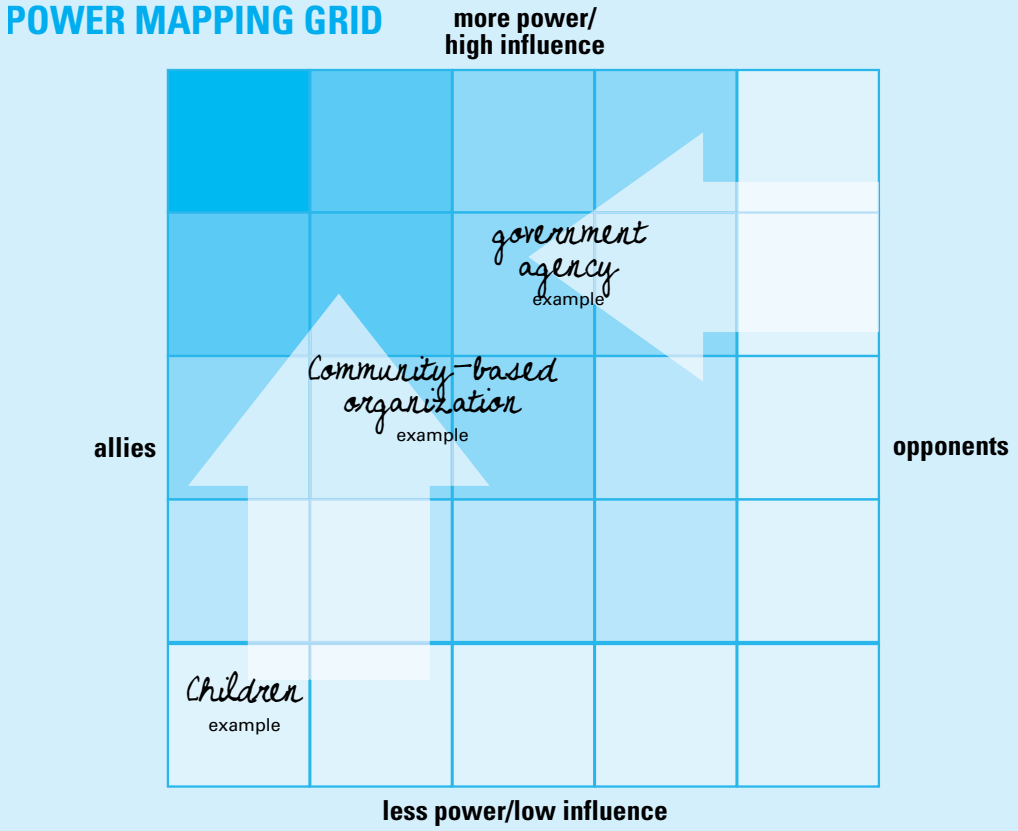
In order to identify key targets, it is important to understand the relative power, support and opposition of stakeholders. Using information gathered from Tool 5, map the stakeholders on the grid below according to their likely position (allies or opponents) on the change being desired and according to their level of influence (high or low). Stakeholders mapped near the left and right edges are strong allies or opponents, and those near the middle are categorized as neutral. A higher placement in the grid indicates greater power and lower placement indicates less power.

Taking the example from Tool 5 analysis forward, children may be UNICEF's greatest allies, but because they have less power they may be plotted closer to the bottom of the grid. Similarly, community-based organizations may hold some power and may be neutral. They are plotted closer to the centre. A particular government agency may hold a high degree of power, but may be in opposition on the issue, and so are plotted towards the top right.

Analyse the implications of how stakeholders are placed on the grid. Why are some stakeholders more powerful than others? Are there any patterns in terms of which stakeholders are opposed and which ones are allies?

The arrows indicate the basic directions in which strategies should be developed, and can help identify the key targets. When developing an advocacy strategy, it is important to:

- Examine the capacities and abilities to move the opponents and make them less opposed, passive opponents or even allies. Institutions and individuals that are neutral can also become allies through advocacy.
- Aim to increase the strength of allies without power.
- Persuade passive allies with power to provide levels of credible support and become active.
- Influence active opponents to become passive opponents.




Adapted from: Bhandari, Neha, 'Regional Capacity Buildingyk Workshop for Realizing Child Rights', Save the Children Sweden, Stockholm, 2006.

## Identifying target audiences and partners

**Keep in mind** Power relationships change. Power does not remain static. This means that power analysis must be undertaken frequently over the course of a long-term advocacy plan.

The next step is to identify target audiences – the individuals or institutions that have the power to bring about change. This task draws on information gathered in the stakeholder analysis and forms the first part of placing stakeholders within an advocacy strategy. In many cases, the primary target audience is also the primary duty bearer, and the goal includes persuading them that the issue is worth addressing, then convincing them to take action.

When identifying target audiences it is important to:

- Pick ones both allies and opponents that have the power to make change happen.
- Pick only a few targets to direct energy and focus.
- Pick ones that might be able to influence each other.
- Pick ones that you have the ability to influence.

Once target audiences have been identified, it is important to conduct research on each of them. Tool 7 below can help provide the basic questions for some of the research; however, it will often be necessary to conduct deeper research for each target. Often, highly successful advocacy campaigns devote a lot of time to understanding the intricacies of each target audience to gain a good understanding of how to influence them.

### TOOL 7. Mapping target audiences

| | Target 1 | Target 2 |
|---|---|---|
| **Target audience** (target name) | | |
| **Target's interests in the issue** (state target's interests) | | |
| **Target's level of opposition to or support for the issue** (strong ally, medium ally, neutral, medium opponent, strong opponent) | | |
| **Target's influence over issue** (unknown, no influence, some influence, moderate influence, significant influence, very influential) | | |
| **Level of knowledge on the issue** (very high, high, medium, low, none) | | |
| **Action desired from the target** (state action desired) | | |

## TOOL 7. Mapping target audiences *cont.*

| | Target 1 | Target 2 |
|---|---|---|
| **Existing level of access to the target** (very high, high, medium, low, none) | | |
| **What will the target respond to?** (for details, see Question 3: What do they need to hear?) | | |
| **Who is the target accountable to?** (state who the target is accountable to, and, if possible, how) | | |

On the basis of the stakeholder and power analysis, along with identification of target audiences, some preliminary planning can be done to identify partners. Relationships and partnerships are very important in advocacy, and can provide addition, force, power and credibility to the advocacy actions undertaken.

Identifying partners is based on many factors. It is important that the partnership brings added-value to the campaign. Following are a few areas to consider when selecting partners for advocacy (more guidance can be found in Chapter 7 Building Relationships and Securing Partnerships).

- Can they influence our target audience?
- Do we have shared interests and goals?
- Do they increase legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of advocacy campaign?
- Do they bring evidence, knowledge or technical expertise?
- Do they bring other resources to the advocacy initiative?
- Do they have global, national or local presence?
- Are their strengths and abilities complementary to ours?

Particular efforts need to involve stakeholders who lack influence but who are nonetheless central, such as children and their families. Appropriate forms of their participation must be planned throughout the advocacy process (see Chapter 8 for more information on working with children and young people in advocacy).

**Keep in mind** Partners and relationships should always be consistent with UNICEF's Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships.

## Understanding how they can make it happen

Understanding the trade-offs a decision maker may have to make, and providing possible solutions, will significantly advance the advocacy effort. There are two steps to identifying how target audiences can make the changes sought by advocacy. First, understand the institutional and decision-making process. And second, identify how change can occur within that process. Once we have an understanding of how target audiences can make the changes, we can identify the entry points where we and our partners can help catalyse change.

CASE STUDY

## Advocacy to protect budgets in the global economic crisis

As a result of the recent complex global crises of 2008-2010, governments are likely to face tighter budget constraints as a result of reduced (and also possibly more volatile) export receipts and aid, coupled with a weak rebound in domestic revenues. All this is occurring at a time when the public sector needs to allocate resources to protect poor families from the negative impacts of the crisis. Even if policymakers want to spend more on children, if the 'economic pie' is not getting any bigger, it will be difficult for them to do so. In very poor and cash-strapped countries, already difficult decisions on resource allocations and policy priorities will become even more difficult when budgets shrink and trade-offs become more acute. Therefore, although sometimes challenging, advocacy initiatives can be significantly more powerful when they help identify potential solutions to the problem.

In the case of the economic crisis, it is important to make the case for why investing in children is more important than other investments. Here, rights and economic-based arguments could both be developed to strengthen the advocacy message. In addition, policy work could focus on analysing government expenditures and helping to ensure that States carry out their commitments to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as help promote a more transparent and evidence-based debate on policy options. The following recent examples of crisis-related work help to illustrate how an evidence-based case could be advanced to protect children, women and poor families during the crisis:

- UNICEF Turkey has partnered with the World Bank and a Turkish think tank (TEPAV) to monitor the evolving impact of the global financial crisis on largest cities in Turkey. The most notable conclusion of the survey is that while there are many different ways through which families try to deal with the crisis, among the poorest 20 percent of urban families almost half of the parents reported that they had to reduce food consumption for their children. Such evidence-based cases provide an understanding of the coping mechanisms households take, which would further enable and inform policymakers and prompt them to more timely and tailored policy responses to the crisis.
- UNICEF's East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office organized a high-level regional conference on the "Impact of the Economic Crisis on Children in East Asia and the Pacific Islands" from 6-7 January 2009 in Singapore. The event included 14 ministers or vice-ministers, including one deputy prime-minister and 4 ministers of finance, and academics, partners and donors from the region. Background papers by notable academics were commissioned on the effects of the economic crisis on children. The conference allowed an exchange of ideas and concerns. The main message to ensure that the crisis does not harm poor families as past crises have was to boost and scale up social protection systems and build new ones where none exist. Social protection was identified as an affordable and essential medium to combat recession, as it has a huge multiplier effect through the creation of jobs for teachers, childcare workers, administrators and others.
- UNICEF and Fordham University, with the support of the European Commission, hosted a policy forum on 18-19 February 2010 in New York which brought together partners and academics to discuss emerging empirical evidence on the impact of the global economic crisis and to arrive at some key policy responses to protect children from harm. The conference evaluated the emerging impacts of the crisis in a multitude of regions around the world, and helped to provide a global picture. The need to protect social spending was emphasized: if social spending on women and children decreases, the negative impact on the poor could be severe. A more inclusive recovery that benefits the poor requires adequate resources for the social sectors, as well as efforts to improve government accountability and public finance for children.

Based on input from Ronald Mendoza, Gabriel Vergara, and Sheila Murthy, Social Policy and Economic Analysis Unit, Division of Policy and Practice, UNICEF

Understanding the institutional and decision-making process provides a foundation for knowing how the target audience can make change happen and helps pinpoint opportunities and entry points for advocacy. Analysing institutional and decision-making processes requires a working knowledge of the political, cultural and religious landscape of the country; decision-making cycles (both formal and informal), budget implementation; and how these factors relate to international policies and agreements.

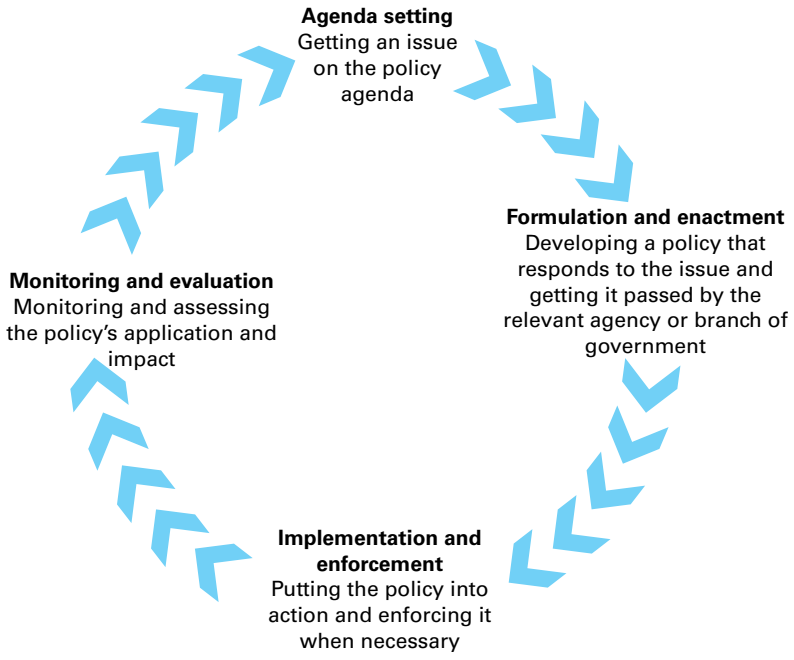
**1. The political, cultural and religious context of the country**

It is crucial to assess the kind of government and governance structures that exist in a country. What type of political system does the country have? What are the key formal political entities, and how do they relate to the governance structure and respond to other policymakers, including the local and international private sector, donors and citizens?[6] Similarly, it is crucial to assess the cultural and religious structures and institutions in the country and determine what space exists to influence results in the political and policy systems. Understanding all of these political, cultural and religious structures forms the basis for decision-making, implementation, and linkages.

**2. The decision-making cycle**

Particularly in policy spheres, decisions can be made according to a cycle or schedule. Knowing the schedule is important – last-minute interventions rarely work, and the earlier in the decision-making cycle the idea is accepted, the more effective the end result is likely to be. The four phases of decision-making usually include: (a) agenda setting, (b) formulation and enactment, (c) implementation and enforcement, and (d) monitoring and evaluation. While each phase is distinct, they often interact with each other. The graphic below illustrates this cycle:

**PHASES OF DECISION-MAKING[7]**

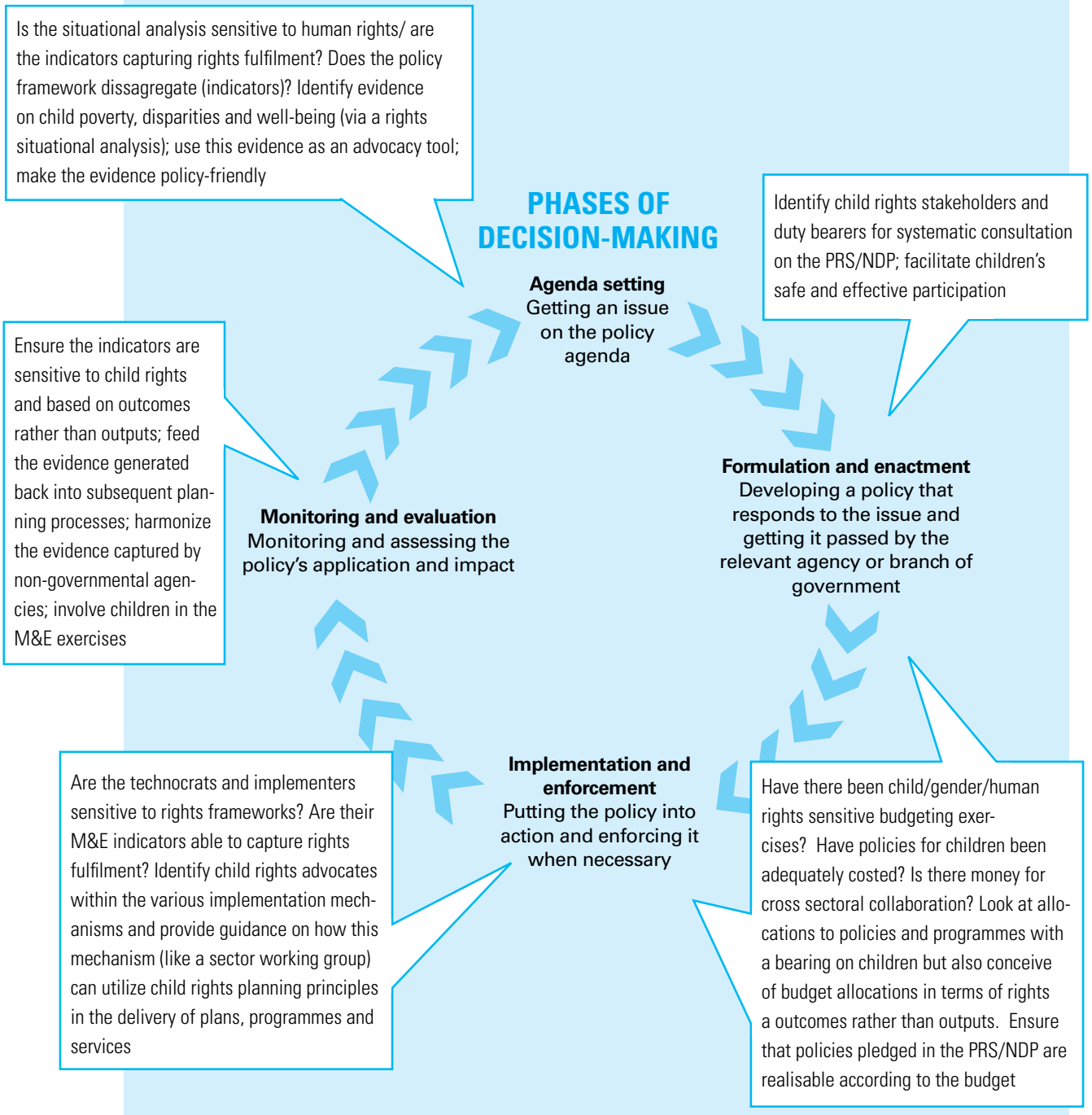



6 Adapted from: Veneklasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002, p..

7 Miller, Valerie, and Jane Covey, *Advocacy Sourcebook: Frameworks for planning, action and reflection*, Institute for Development Research, Boston, 1997

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Assessing child rights visibility and entry points in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) process




Adapted from: UNICEF – ODI forthcoming. 'Child Rights in Poverty Reduction Strategy Processes – A Desk Review'

**SPECIAL FOCUS** ***Cont.***

| Contextual influences and implications for child rights policy adoption | |
|---|---|
| **Institutional quality** | Institutional quality can affect the understanding of and commitment to comply with the CRC at different levels, the capacity for roll-out of child rights policies, the balance of power and the degree of openness to civil society engagement. |
| **Political friendliness** | Political friendliness and support can enable constructive consultation and engagement during the agenda-setting process. For example, explicit recognition of the value of human rights would suggest a greater inclination to engage with child rights experts and have an open, participatory agenda-setting process.<br>*NB: In an attempt to capture these dynamics, the African Child Policy Forum has created a child-friendliness index to measure government performance in meeting international commitments on children, including child rights. See www.africanchildforum.org for more information.* |
| **Public financial management** | Public financial management (PFM) can impact the 'quality of spending', including on child rights, from budget allocations according to planned priorities (allocation efficiency), to the delivery of services for children through adequate use of funds. PFM includes all components of a country's budget process – both upstream (including strategic planning, medium-term expenditure frameworks, annual budgeting) and downstream (including revenue management, procurement, control, accounting, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, audit and oversight). |
| **Fiscal space** | Fiscal space will affect the degree to which a government's budget will allow it to provide resources for a desired purpose (such as child rights policies) without jeopardising the sustainability of its financial position or the stability of the economy. Fiscal space can be created in a variety of ways, such as increased fiscal revenues, reallocating spending, debt reduction, increased borrowing, increased aid, etc. |
| **Decentralization** | The level of decentralisation directly influences both decision-making power over policy priorities and service delivery. Basic services for children: education, health and child protection, are generally the first to be decentralised; it is therefore crucial to understand where policy, programming and budgeting decisions are made, and to what extent resources are transferred to enable mandates and realise responsibilities. |
| **Demographics** | A country's demographics and the experiences and vulnerabilities of children can vary from one location to another, as well as over time. Understanding that variation, particularly of children in the total population (in the short and medium term), is particularly important to making adequate programming decisions. |
| **Participation** | Government openness to participation and equitable political and civil engagement may determine whether the PRS/NDP is consensual and to what extent social concerns are addressed. Where there is active participation by children and their guardians, child rights issues are more likely to be highlighted and included in the PRS/NDP document. |

### 3. Government budgets

Budgets are very powerful policies and decisions produced by governments, because they often reveal the true priorities. Therefore, advocacy surrounding public budgets is important both as an objective and tool for advocates. Many advocacy strategies push for transparency and the right to information within budgeting processes, and larger and more efficient use of resources for the marginalized groups of society.

UNICEF uses various strategies for advocating for more child-friendly budgets, such as:

- Budget analyses, which compares government budgetary commitments (either over time or for a certain year) with the resources required to meet its policy priorities, such as achieving the MDGs. Results of budget analyses are often shared with the Ministry of Finance or Parliament for direct advocacy, or the media to create public debate and involve citizens in budget decision-making. In Ecuador, budget analysis and advocacy activities have been institutionalized into Social Policy Observatories.

- Costing tools, which estimate the amount of resources needed for certain policies or goals to be fully implemented or realized, back up advocacy for additional budget allocations with quantitative evidence. For instance, the Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks Tool revealed that, in Mauritania, a US$1.50 increase in per capita health spending would be required to reduce infant mortality by 30 per cent and maternal mortality by 40 per cent. This advocacy message later on contributed to a 40 per cent increase in the country's health budget.

- Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) monitors public finances as they cascade from one office to another, with the purpose of identifying where leakages take place. As a result, advocacy efforts are more focused and directed at the specific units where inefficiencies are created.

UNICEF's advocacy work for more child-friendly budgets is not limited to these examples. In fact, UNICEF is working with governments around the world to help build systems and capacities for better public financial management (PFM). UNICEF's advocacy work has involved partnering with governments that are reforming their PFM systems, or are formulating their Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs), Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) or National Development Plans (NDPs). UNICEF is also working closely with civil society organizations, either to improve their capacities to engage in social budget work, or to build networks to combine and strengthen the voices of these advocates.

Throughout its advocacy strategies, UNICEF is guided by these two primary rights-based principles:

1. Maximum available resources for children: A child's right to food, health, housing, education among other rights could be advanced through public finance policy by channelling the maximum available resources for children (article IV of the Convention on the Rights of the Child). It is possible to concretely reflect this in the following public finance principles:

   Equity: Budgets should emphasize non-discrimination, social inclusion, and an attention to power relations. This implies ensuring that children, women and poor families are not marginalized in both the actual public sector allocations as well as the decision-making processes.

   Efficiency: That budgeting involves raising revenues, allocating resources, and achieving outcomes with the least distortions and costs.

   Stability: That budget decisions support sustained and long-term objectives as well as reflect pro-poor countercyclical policies and ensure sufficient social protection during periods of economic volatility. Contributing

to stability would therefore involve securing adequate resources to sustain investments in the social sectors and promote social protection, notably during times when they are most needed, for example, during crises.

2. Participation and accountability: Participatory decision-making processes could help to ensure that everyone has a voice. Further, public finance management could be underpinned by transparent processes, providing information on the budget to the public in a way that ensures the widest dissemination and enabling their proactive engagement. This, in turn, could help to promote a more accountable policymaking process, and help to promote the proper oversight to achieve equitable, efficient and stable budgets for children.

*For more information on UNICEF's advocacy and various innovations for securing child-friendly budgets, please visit www.fordham.edu/unicef. Also see: UNICEF (2010). 'A Guide to Advancing the Rights of Children, Women and Poor Families through Better Public Finance Policies.' UNICEF Social and Economic Policy Working Paper. UNICEF, New York*

**4. The linkage between national policies and international policies and agreements**

International policies, commitments and conventions are valuable tools to fuel national and local advocacy. The monitoring mechanisms built into international instruments, such as the CRC and CEDAW reporting processes, will help determine ways to influence policy and practice. The advocacy processes around these should draw upon regional and international advocacy networks.

The language used in international policies can also be used to define advocacy messages. Even where there may be international agreements but no mechanism for enforcing them with governments, linking the advocacy strategy to these agreements can move advocacy forward. In this way, international policies become essential entry points for national advocacy.

## Theories of change[8]

While advocacy strategies are being designed, it is important to have a clear sense of how the change process may be expected to occur. Just as academics develop theories, advocates have their own ideas about what will help them achieve or move towards a policy 'win'. Understanding different theories of change can help organizations more effectively choose advocacy strategies and focus evaluation efforts on the most relevant outcomes.

**Keep in mind** Advocacy strategies will usually draw on elements from a variety of theories. The value of analyzing these theories is not to provide a single approach or theory for developing an advocacy strategy, but to build on advocates' experience and help them more fully understand the challenges they face.

8 This section features excerpts from: Stachowiak, Sarah, 'Pathways for Change: 6 theories about how policy change happens', Organizational Research Services, Seattle, WA, 2008, p. 3; open PDF at www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/pathways_for_change_6_theories_about_how_policy_change_happens.pdf, accessed 13 July 2010.

**Keep in mind** Although the theories summarized in the table focus on policy change, many of the concepts hold true for other areas of advocacy.

The table below summarizes six theories grounded in diverse social science disciplines and worldviews that have relevance to policy change efforts. The six theories include three global theories developed by political scientists to explain how various kinds of advocacy strategies and conditions relate to policy change, and three theories about common advocacy strategies or tactics that are likely part of broader advocacy efforts or campaigns. The value of these theories is to build on advocates' experience and help them more fully understand the challenges they face, and will meet, to advance a human rights-based advocacy strategy.

Once an analysis of the decision-making process and theory of change has been conducted, one can begin thinking about concrete actions that are required of target audience. Identifying opportunities within the decision-making process will be covered in Question 5, however it is useful to first understand 'What do they need to hear' (Question 3) and 'Who do they need to hear it from' (Question 4).

## SPECIAL FOCUS Six theories of change[9]

Global theories

| Theory (see footnotes for key authors) | Discipline | How change happens | This theory may be useful when … | Promising strategies include … |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **'Large leaps' or punctuated equilibrium theory[1]** | Political science | Like seismic evolutionary shifts, significant changes in policy and institutions can occur when the right conditions are in place | Large-scale policy change is the primary goal<br><br>Strong capacity for media advocacy exists | Issue framing, mobilizing supporters and media advocacy, and including resonant cultural symbols and metaphors<br><br>Efforts should focus on questioning policies at fundamental levels as opposed to making administrative or rule changes to existing policies<br><br>Issue definition and agenda setting are key to mobilizing new people around an issue |
| **'Coalition' theory or advocacy coalition framework[2]** | Political science | Policy change happens through coordinated activity among a range of individuals with the same core policy beliefs | A sympathetic administration is in office<br><br>A strong group of allies with a common goal is in place or can be formed | Influencing like-minded decision-makers to make policy changes<br><br>Creating an issue intensity that can lead to challenging and even changing incumbents in various positions of power<br><br>Affecting public opinion via mass media<br><br>Changing perceptions about policies through research and information exchange<br><br>Coalitions will typically explore and pursue multiple avenues for change, e.g., engaging in legal advocacy and changing public opinion, often simultaneously, to find a route that will bear fruit<br><br>Coalitions can find 'unlikely allies' by identifying and reaching out to diverse groups with similar core policy beliefs; coalitions of 'un-alikes' can be a source of strength |
| **'Policy windows' or agenda setting[3]** | Political science | Policy can be changed during a window of opportunity when advocates successfully connect two or more components: the way a problem is defined, the policy solution to the problem or the political climate surrounding the advocacy issue | Multiple policy streams can be addressed simultaneously (problem definition, policy solutions and/or political climate)<br><br>Internal capacity exists to create, identify and act on policy windows | Forging problem definition by: framing the issue; monitoring indicators that assess existence and magnitude of issues, initiating special studies of an issue, promoting constituent feedback; developing policy options through research, publications and use of video and audio if available; influencing the political climate by engaging in coalition building, demonstrations and media advocacy<br><br>Advocates and organizations need capacity to create or recognize policy windows and then respond appropriately |

9 Stachowiak, Sarah, 'Pathways for Change: 6 theories about how policy change happens', Organizational Research Services, Seattle, WA, 2008, p. 3; open PDF at www.organizationalresearch.com/publications/pathways_for_change_6_theories_about_how_policy_change_happens.pdf, accessed 13 July 2010

## Six theories of change *cont.*

Theories related to strategies or tactics

| Theory (see footnotes for key authors) | Discipline | How change happens | This theory may be useful when … | Promising strategies include … |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **'Messaging and frameworks' or prospect theory[4]** | Psychology | Individuals' policy preferences or willingness to accept them will vary depending on how options are framed or presented | The issue needs to be redefined as part of a larger campaign or effort<br><br>A key focus of the work is on increasing awareness, agreement on problem definition or an issue's salience | Promising strategies include issue framing (or reframing), message development, communications and media advocacy<br><br>This theory is likely embedded as one strategy in a broader campaign rather than as a stand-alone activity |
| **'Power politics' or power elites theory[5]** | Sociology | Policy change is made by working directly with those with power to make decisions or influence decision-making | One or more key allies is in place<br><br>The focus is on incremental policy change, e.g., administrative or rule changes | Promising strategies include relationship development and communication with those who have influence<br><br>Advocacy efforts are focused on the few, not the many<br><br>It is critical to identify who has influence related to the specific policy issue or area being addressed and to develop relationships with them<br><br>The organization must be seen as a credible partner or voice to affect the thinking and actions of decision-makers or messengers |
| **'Grass-roots' or community organizing theory[6]** | Social psychology | Policy change is made through collective action by members of the community who work on changing problems affecting their lives | A distinct group of individuals is directly affected by an issue<br><br>The advocacy organization can and is willing to play a convener or capacity-builder role rather than the 'driver' role | Promising strategies include training, capacity building, community mobilizing, awareness building, action research, policy analysis, media advocacy, social protest, whistle-blowing<br><br>Advocacy efforts are focused on working with the many, not the few<br><br>The advocacy organization is not the leader, rather it helps facilitate efforts of a collective to achieve social change |

1 Baumgartner, Frank R., and Brian Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1993.
2 Sabatier, Paul A., *Theories of the Policy Process*, Westview, Boulder, CO, 1999.
3 Kingdon, John W., *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2nd ed., Harper Collins College, New York, 1995.
4 Tversky, Amos, and Daniel Kahneman, *'The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice'*, Science, vol. 211, no. 4481, pp. 453–458.
5 Mills, C. Wright, The Power Elite, new ed., Oxford University, New York, 2000; and Domhoff, G. William, T*he Power Elite and the State: How policy is made in America,* Aldine De Gruyter, New York, 1990.
6 Alinsky, Saul D., *Rules for Radicals: A pragmatic primer for realistic radicals*, Vintage, New York, 1989; and Biklen, Douglas P., Community Organizing Theory and Practice, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1983.

## Question 3. What do they need to hear?

Once we have a sense of who the target audiences are, reaching them requires crafting persuasive messages. These messages must always be rooted in the same basic truth, but should 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.[10]

Knowing what they need to hear involves understanding what will motivate and move each target audience and developing evidence-based messages that are directed towards each of them.

### What motivates target audiences?

In order to determine what motivates and moves target audiences, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of the target audiences. What is the target likely to gain from the proposed changes? How could the changes upset the target or conflict with the targets' goals? Much of this analysis has been already conducted in the previous questions – "What do we want?" and "Who can make it happen?"

A careful analysis of what motivates and moves the target audiences allows the advocate to be aware of the best ways of influencing them, and where possible, illustrate potential alignment between what motivates and moves the target and the advocacy goals. Sometimes understanding what motivates and moves the target audience is enough; other times it might be necessary to explain it to the target audience.

CASE STUDY

### Arguments for integrating child rights into the Poverty Reduction Strategy:*

What are the incentive for national governments and policy makers to improve their focus upon children's wellbeing and to adapt a child rights approach within poverty reduction strategy planning? Here are four key drivers:

**Social motivation**

In many developing countries, children and youth constitute close to half of the national demographic and this figure is steadily increasing.** It is estimated that, by 2050, the number of youth (aged 15-24) will have risen by 38% since 1950 and that 9 in 10 youths will be in developing countries.† This burgeoning demographic necessitates that the needs and concerns of this social group are adequately incorporated into national planning documents.

**Economic motivation**

Focusing poverty reduction efforts on overcoming childhood poverty and deprivation, and on the attainment of children's and youths' rights, is key in developing human capital and the social potential of future generations. Increased levels of human capital can in turn lead to productivity gains and to a country's economic growth.

According to Sen††, the capabilities that adults enjoy are deeply conditional on their experiences as children: First, a secure childhood can directly make adult lives richer and less problematic because it can improve the capacity to live a more stable life, with greater opportunities. Second, investments in childhood and

* Adapted from: UNICEF/EC Child Rights Toolkit. Component 3: The Visibility of Child Rights in Poverty Reduction Strategies

** This is not the case in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

† Population Reference Bureau (PRB) (2009) *World Population Datasheet*, Washington D.C: PRB.

†† Sen, A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## CASE STUDY Arguments for Integrating Child Rights *cont.*

building confidence contribute to adults' ability to earn a living and to be economically productive. There is also evidence of higher rates of school enrolment expanding economic growth through such factors as higher wage rates.* A further example, using longitudinal ECD studies which focus upon a relatively small number of at-risk children from low-income families, demonstrates that the potential return is extraordinary; this study estimates that annual public return to high-quality ECD programmes might be as high as 12 per cent (inflation adjusted) (Grunewald and Rolnick)**. Similarly, Heckman and Masterov's findings indicate that individual productivity can be fostered by investments in young children, particularly those in poverty or other adverse circumstances†. While Heckman and Masterov acknowledge the rights and justices argument for investing in children, they argue that it also makes sense, from a productivity perspective, to invest in young children from disadvantaged environments as there is substantial evidence showing that without support, these children are more likely to commit crime, have out-of-wedlock births and drop out of school.

This focus on human capital in relation to rights to development and survival is underscored by the indivisibility of rights: for example, investing in social protection, child protection and health can significantly increase the demand for education, contributing to the fulfilment of the right to education (as shown, for example, by child grants programmes such as Oportunidades in Mexico, and Bolsa Familia in Brazil).

These examples illustrate the economic growth efficiency gains of investing in child rights outcomes, through policies and programming focusing on children's rights to survival, development, protection and participation. This suggests that rather than being in opposition, there are significant complementarities between the pursuit of poverty reduction through economic growth and the pursuit of rights objectives: policies to achieve key rights outcomes can have a positive impact on growth, and in ways consistent with contemporary theoretical and empirical work on growth determinants (McKay and Vizard)††. Seymour and Pincus††† suggest that human rights cannot function independently as a policy tool because it is does not focus on choices and outcomes; similarly, economics cannot frame policy choices because it cannot integrate standards about how human beings should be treated. Thus, each makes the other useful: a human rights perspective directs the tools of economics to align them with the principles we share and which are articulated in international law; economic understanding and tools empower those who believe in human rights to pursue their realisation more effectively.

**Political motivation**

Using a child-focused lens highlights the connections between different household members' experiences' of poverty and acknowledges the complex forms of vulnerability which may induce or perpetuate poverty. This perspective encourages more effective, comprehensive approaches to tackling poverty reduction, which in turn result in a more judicious use of resources. Fostering a deeper understanding of the population's specific vulnerabilities and targeting these problems is also likely to lead to more widespread popular political support.

**Legal obligation**

In accordance with the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, it is a fundamental human right (and a child's right, as reinforced in the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC)) to live in an environment free from fear and deprivation. As the primary duty bearer to the citizenry, governments are obliged to recognise, respect and ensure progressive realization/fulfilment of these rights. As a core expression of government policy, the PRS/NDP document should reflect this commitment, as well as ensuring that adequate budgetary resources and implementation mechanisms are in place.

* See Mankiw, N., Romer, D., and D. Weil (1992) 'A contribution to the empirics of economic growth', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 107 (2): 407-437.; Murrugarra, E., (1998) Completeness of markets and economic shocks, Lima: Mimeo; Schultz, P.T. (2003) 'Wage rentals for reproducible human capital: evidence from Ghana and the Ivory Coast', *Economics and Human Biology,* Elsevier, vol. 1(3), pg. 331-366.

** Grunewald, R. and Rolnick, A. (2006); A Proposal for Achieving High Returns on Early Childhood Development; Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, March 2006.

† Heckman and Materov's (2007) paper focuses on young American children growing up in disadvantaged environments. See Heckman J. and D. Masterov, (2007); The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children; Mimeo, University of Chicago.

†† McKay, A. and Vizard, P. (2005); Rights and economic growth: Inevitable conflict or 'common ground'? Human Rights and Poverty Reduction, March, ODI.

††† Seymour, D. and Pincus, J. (2008); Human Rights and Economics: The Conceptual Basis for their Complementarity; Development Policy Review, 2008, 26 (4): 387-405.

## Developing the message

A primary message is the overall driving force behind how you are perceived by an audience. It is akin to your brief response when someone asks, "What do you do?" If you cannot communicate a clear, concise and compelling answer in less than one minute, you risk losing the other person's attention, interest or support.

The message is the overarching theme that holds an entire campaign together. It is not easy to reduce complex issues facing the world's children to one simple statement. But it needs to be done, because complex and overly technical messages do not get attention. Simple and direct messages have great power to attract attention to your cause. Once you have your audience's attention, there will be many more opportunities to explain the issue in detail.

**Keep in mind** In message development, it's often effective to link target audiences with those to whom they are accountable. Tying your message to the stakeholders' concerns can remind your advocacy audience of how addressing the issue will help fulfil their responsibilities.

Messages can be both primary and secondary. The primary message is the most universally compelling statement to all audiences (e.g., It is possible to eradicate polio). When a particular audience needs reinforcement, a primary message is often supported by secondary messages. Secondary messages often explain how the objectives of the primary message will be met. There may be several secondary messages tailored to the specific needs of an audience.

### TOOL 8. Developing evidence-based messages

When there is limited time to present your case, it's important to be prepared. Ideally, you need to be able to summarize and present the advocacy message in three or four sharp sentences:

The **primary message** should include the following:

*Statement + evidence + example + goal + action desired*

- The statement is the central idea in the message, or the analysis/cause of the problem. It outlines why the change is important
- The evidence, which the analysis is based, supports the statement with (easily understood) facts and figures, using tailored language for clear communication.
- An example will add a human face when communicating that message.
- The goal highlights what we want to achieve. It is the result (or partial result) of the action desired.
- The action desired is what you want to do in support of reaching your defined objective(s) or goal(s). It is the solution (or partial solution) to the problem. This forms the core of an advocacy message and distinguishes it from many other types of communication.

In some cases, such as TV interviews or unexpected encounters with a contact at an event, it is useful to have a one-sentence version of your primary message so that you can transmit the main point of the message in a matter of seconds.

A **secondary message** is a message that is tailored for a particular target audience. It provides further explanation or is used when a particular audience needs a primary message to be reinforced. Secondary messages often explain how the objectives of the primary message will be met, including the actions that should be taken by the audience addressed. Several secondary messages may be needed, each tailored to the specific needs of an audience.

* Adapted from "Content and language: The fundamentals of advocacy communication" from Veneklasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002..

## TOOL 8. Developing evidence-based messages *cont.*

They might include analysis of the following questions:*

- What will be most persuasive for the audience?
- What information does that audience need to hear?
- What action do you want that audience to take (given that different audiences have different capacities to bring about change)?
- What are their political interests? What are their self-interests in relation to the issue? What group of people do they represent?
- What do they already know? What new information are you offering?
- Do they already have an opinion? What is it and how strongly held? Do they have a public position?
- What objections might they have? What might they lose? What misconceptions or arguments will you have to counter?
- What personal interests do they have?
- Do their backgrounds (personal, educational, professional) suggest a bias? Can the issue be linked to something they support?

*Choosing the right words is decisive in getting the message across.* Your message must resonate, because the purpose of advocacy is to motivate people to initiate change. Words should be culturally appropriate, so they are understood, clarify the stakes, and motivate people in favour of the cause while reducing opposition.

*Use audience-appropriate language.* Find out what your audiences know, their concerns, their values and priorities, and what kind of language they use. To capture people's attention, know their interests, their situations and their vocabulary.

*Balance the rational and the emotional in your message.* Speak to audiences so the message captures both minds and hearts. Solid data are crucial to establishing the scientific (rational) foundation of the message. A human interest story can reach those who respond to the emotional.

*Structure, or frame, the issue and solution:***

- Translate individual stories into larger social and political problems.
- Assign primary responsibility to the problem.
- Present a clear solution.
- Spell out the proposal.
- Develop images that highlight your values.

Use the table below to frame messages for different audiences.† The table aids in mapping concerns (both in general and in relation to the issue) and possible messages for each type of audience.

| **PRIMARY MESSAGE: Statement + evidence + example + goal + action desired** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **AUDIENCE** | **CONCERNS** | **POSSIBLE MESSAGES** |
| *For example: Decision-makers (government ministers, legislators, administrators, corporation heads)* | | |
| *For example: Donors (foundations, bilateral agencies, multilateral agencies)* | | |
| *For example: Journalists* | | |
| *For example: Civil society organizations* | | |
| *For example: Issue-related practitioners such as trade unions* | | |
| *For example: General public* | | |
| *For example: Opinion leaders (religious leaders, chiefs and traditional/community leaders)* | | |

* Gosling, Louisa, and David Cohen, *Participant's Manual: Advocacy matters – Helping children change their world*, International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, p. 95.

** Adapted from Advocacy Learning Initiative, vol II

† Adapted from: Owens, Becky, and Kraig Klaudt, 'TB Advocacy: A practical guide 1999', WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme, Geneva, 1998, p. 15.

CASE STUDY

## The Global Polio Eradication Initiative: Framing messages for different audiences

The World Health Assembly voted to launch a worldwide goal to eliminate polio in 1988. In response, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative – spearheaded by national governments, WHO, Rotary International, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and UNICEF – became the single largest public health initiative in the world. Since 1988, more than 200 countries and 20 million volunteers have cooperated to immunize more than 2 billion children against polio.*

The overriding objective was clear: to attain a polio-free world. Primary messages in support of this goal were developed jointly by the Initiative's partners, and helped maintain and strengthen financial support, political commitment and community engagement. Messages are updated and distributed frequently, complemented by epidemiological updates.

The campaign was remarkably successful with its original primary message: It is possible to eradicate polio. As the work evolved, the original message was updated, and in 2003, it focused on taking action in the seven countries where polio remained endemic. The 2003 messages listed here offer a prime example of key and supporting messages for a successful advocacy campaign:

**Primary message**
The immediate priority is to stop transmission of polio by end-2004 in the seven remaining endemic countries: Afghanistan, Egypt, India, the Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan and Somalia.

**Supporting secondary message for donors and donor governments**
The global funding gap of $210 million for activities through 2005 remains a great risk to polio eradication.

**Supporting secondary message for G8 countries**
France, Germany and Italy must follow the lead of their G8 counterparts and fulfil their financial pledge and commitment to polio eradication.

**Supporting secondary message for endemic country governments**
Political commitment and ownership at the sub-national level needs to be established or strengthened to mirror the strong existing commitment at the national level. Ongoing polio transmission in the endemic countries will continue to pose a risk to children everywhere until polio is eradicated.

**Supporting secondary message for recently endemic- and polio-free countries**
There have been nine importations of polio from endemic countries into previously polio-free countries. Importations will remain a risk until polio is eradicated everywhere and should be treated as a public health threat, requiring a full and immediate immunization response.**

* Global Polio Eradication Initiative, 'The History', www.polioeradication.org/history.asp, accessed 23 June 2010.
** United Nations Development Programme, *The Blue Book: A hands-on approach to advocating for the Millennium Development Goals*, UNDP, New York, 2004, p. 10.

## Question 4. Who do they need to hear it from?

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 those who can speak from personal experience. What do we need to do to equip these messengers, both in terms of information and to increase their comfort level as advocates?[11]

Mapping the audience with messengers and then choosing messengers strategically are the fundamental steps to knowing who the audience needs to hear the message from.

### Choosing messengers

Once there is an understanding of who holds the power to create the necessary changes *(see Question 2)* and what they need to hear *(see Question 3)* it is possible to identify the people and institutions that can influence them: the messengers.

**Keep in mind** Some of the strongest messengers are rights holders. Once key targets have been identified, it is important to ask: To whom are they accountable? Are they accountable to those who are affected by the issue? Are they fulfilling their responsibilities as duty bearers?

Messengers are those who have influence, or power over, the key targets to bring about the desired change. Because they do not have the direct power to make the necessary changes, messengers are a 'secondary' target audience. Media, religious leaders, community-based organizations and donors could all be considered as a secondary target audience for an advocacy objective to influence policy changes. They can't change policies directly, but they can influence those who can.

**Keep in mind** Involving children, young people and community members in preparing and sharing advocacy messages is a vital way to gain credibility and bring added strength to advocacy efforts. It draws on the power of authentic voices speaking up for themselves, which provides its own source of power.

Strategic dissemination of the message can be as crucial as the message itself. The choice of messenger could provide credibility, clarity or empathy to the message and the issue. A local community leader, religious leader, celebrity or children's group, for example, may sometimes be more effective at delivering a message and being heard. The decision of who will make an effective and strategic messenger depends on the advocacy priority, and on internal and external assessment of the advocacy situation.

Preparing a messenger is part of an advocate's responsibility. Talking points are a useful tool to support messengers, colleagues and partners in understanding how the message helps accomplish the goal, and ways to use the primary and secondary messages as well as stay on message. Tools to enhance their message-sharing experience include practice sessions on how to address different audiences. Talking with government officials or community leaders is not the same as answering questions from journalists or appearing in a live interview. Consult with advocacy messengers to find out which audiences will make them most comfortable – and effective.

11 Adapted from Jim Schultz: Strategy Development: Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy. http://www.democracyctr.org/advocacy/strategy.htm

## TOOL 9. Choosing messengers strategically

| | |
|---|---|
| **Target Audience** | Name of target audience |
| **Messenger (Consider several different messengers)** | Individual or group that can influence a target audience. |
| **Position** | What has the messenger said or written about this issue? Add notes from research. Where does the messenger stand in relation to support the advocacy issue? |
| **Power** | What level of influence does the messenger have over the target? |
| **Knowledge** | How much does the messenger know about the issue? |
| **Credibility** | How credible is the messenger in the eyes of the target audience? |
| **Access to the messenger** | How and when does the advocate interact with messenger? Does the advocate have the capacity to engage with the messenger? |
| **Access to target** | How and when does the messenger interact with the target? |
| **Action** | What will the advocacy strategy encourage the messenger to do? |
| **Risks** | What are the risks of engaging the messenger? |
| **Message** | What will the advocates encourage the messenger to tell the target? The advocacy message must be shaped to give the messenger an opportunity to move the target towards taking the action promoted by the advocate. Can the messenger deliver the message with clarity and with empathy? (See Question 3 for details on tailoring an advocacy message.) |

CASE STUDY

## Celebrities as messengers

Popularly recognized people with experience, credibility, and a public image that harmonizes with advocacy goals, bring media attention to issues. The celebrities who commit their high-profile recognition, talent and understanding to support a cause can serve as highly effective messengers.

UNICEF has long-time experience with enlisting the help of well-known actors, athletes and singers. Danny Kaye was the first Ambassador-at-Large, in 1954, followed by Audrey Hepburn, and building into the current distinguished roster of international, regional and national Goodwill Ambassadors. Celebrities supporting UNICEF have a wide range of talents and achievements, but they all share the commitment to improving children's lives. And in each case, a celebrity's association with UNICEF happens because she or he has already demonstrated that commitment.*

The success of UNICEF's relationships with Goodwill Ambassadors includes engaging them in the organization's strategic thinking and keeping them up to date on successes and challenges in implementing programmes and policies in the field. Ambassadors regularly receive UNICEF press releases; UNICEF and UN reports, publications and news; and video clips of programmes and events. They are invited to conferences or briefing events, and through field visits, they can get a first-hand experience of UNICEF's work on the ground. For important campaigns or field visits, Goodwill Ambassadors also receive detailed briefings from UNICEF staff at headquarters or on location, and suggested speaking points for media interviews.

* United Nations Children's Fund, 'Goodwill Ambassadors & Advocates', UNICEF, New York, updated 18 May 2010, www.unicef.org/people/people_ambassadors.html, accessed 24 June 2010.

## Question 5. How can we make sure they hear it?

There are many ways to deliver an advocacy message, ranging from privately meeting individuals to campaigning in a public forum. The most effective means vary from situation to situation. The key is to evaluate your advocacy goals, the specific context and messages, and weave them together into a winning mix.[12]

Making sure your audience hears the message could involve identifying opportunities in the decision-making process, choosing the best format for message delivery, lobbying and negotiation, and working with the mass media and partners.

## Identifying opportunities

Analysing the decision-making process helps to identify opportunities and entry points to begin influencing an issue. These opportunities can be used to strengthen the advocacy position, create alliances, raise awareness and get the advocacy message across.

Connecting with opportunities requires time, energy and resources. The opportunity, therefore, must have the potential to raise the profile of an issue and exert influence by bringing together supporters and those who can be convinced to become supporters, as well as people who hold power to change the issue.

To make the most of the opportunities, advocates need a clear idea of what will be achieved with the opportunities. As there will likely be more than one, the key is to identify and pursue the opportunities that have the best potential for advancing the issue.

### TOOL 10. Identifying and planning opportunities*

Headings at the top show four phases of decision-making; for each item in the left-hand column, corresponding notes can be made to help guide activities during each phase.

| | Agenda setting | Formulation+ enactment | Implementation + enforcement | Monitoring + evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Target audiences + messengers** | | | | |
| **Formal decision-making process** | | | | |
| **Informal decision-making process** | | | | |
| **How can we influence the process at this stage?** | | | | |
| **Opportunity/ entry point/ event to influence** | | | | |
| **Date/timeline** | | | | |

* Gosling, Louisa, and David Cohen, *Participant's Manual: Advocacy matters – Helping children change their world,* International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, p. 82.

12 Adapted from Jim Schultz: Strategy Development: Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy. http://www.democracyctr.org/advocacy/strategy.htm

CASE STUDY

## Setting the agenda*

The following table presents a sample, using a hypothetical Ministry of Health, of some (although not all) of the components of identifying and planning opportunities in the agenda phase of the decision-making process.

| **Agenda Setting** | ***Advocacy outreach strategy: Ministry of Health*** |
|---|---|
| **Target audiences involved** | Directors of the Nutrition and Child Health Offices in the Ministry of Health. |
| **Formal decision-making process** | The Nutrition and Child Health Offices in the Ministry of Health generate a proposal for a national salt fortification programme. One or two people from these offices are assigned the task of developing the proposal fully. |
| **Informal decision-making process** | Informal discussions among the Child Health Office, Nutrition Office, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, salt producers, children's organizations and health organizations take place. Elements of the policy are proposed and discussed. |
| **How can we influence the process at this stage?** | • Meet with child health and nutrition officials to introduce our proposal and to gain their interest, support and enthusiasm.<br>• Be helpful to these offices with other issues they are working on, when appropriate. Become knowledgeable about issues the key decision-makers are interested in.<br>• Meet with groups that might support the programme, such as salt producers, child health and health organizations, to enlist their support.<br>• Work closely with the person or people tasked with developing the proposal. Offer assistance, ask to see drafts of the programme and give comments. |
| **Date/timeline** | January and February. Offices in the Ministry of Health are most open to new ideas at the start of the fiscal year. |

* Adapted from: Gosling, Louisa, and David Cohen, Participant's Manual: Advocacy matters – *Helping children change their world*, International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, p. 76.

## Choosing the best format for message delivery

Message delivery involves careful attention to who and what will convey the message (the messenger) and how the information will be transmitted (the medium or format). Choices about delivery differ depending on the audience, the country and the community. Multiple information strategies are needed if you have diverse audiences.

### TOOL 11. Choosing the best format to communicate your message

The choice of format to deliver the message depends on who you are speaking to, what you want to say, your purpose and your ability to work with that format.

Some of the many different formats* for delivering a message include:

- Person to person (one-on-one lobbying visits, group or community meetings, conferences and workshops, public hearings, protests, public demonstrations)
- Print (newspapers, magazines, journals, newsletters, posters, leaflets, pamphlets, reports, studies, letters to decision makers)
- Electronic (radio, television, video and film, Internet, e.g., blogs, social media websites, YouTube, mobile phone technology)
- Drama and folk art (street theatre, songs, music, poems, dance).

Here are some questions** to guide the selection:

- What are the audience's primary sources of information? Who or what do they listen to? What do they read? What do they watch? What appeals to them?
- What are the audience's characteristics (age, gender, class, employment, race, etc.)? Where do they live? Work? What languages do they speak? Do they read? Do they have access to television and Internet? Do they listen to radio?
- What are the internal skills, capacities and resources required to work with the selected medium? If they are not available internally, how can they be resourced?***

* Adapted from: *Advocacy Learning Initiative*, vol. II, Oxfam and the Advocacy Institute, 1999, Kumarian Press.

**Adapted from: Owens, Becky, and Kraig Klaudt, 'TB Advocacy: A practical guide 1999', WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme, Geneva, 1998, p. 15.

*** Adapted from: Veneklasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002.

**Keep in mind**

- Advocacy is often most effective when messages are delivered in a variety of ways which complement and reinforce each other.
- Each process you choose needs to be thought out carefully in advance.
- The processes differ significantly in terms of who carries out the work. It is therefore important to determine who will lead each process, as well as how other staff members can provide support.

## Processes: Lobbying, negotiating and working with the media

There are many ways to deliver an advocacy message. A few of the most common ways include lobbying, negotiating and working with the media. While lobbying and negotiating usually involve working directly with decision makers and those who influence them, working with the media is more often geared towards mobilising the general public behind the advocacy issue. Working with partners and civil society also generates momentum behind issues, as well as channels the message to target audiences.

### Lobbying and negotiating

Lobbying focuses on gaining access to and influencing a decision-maker who can help bring about change. Negotiating involves advancing the issue by presenting a position and debating with opposition. Both can be informal or formal, and require a good understanding of power dynamics within and between institutions.

There are many ways to gain the attention of decision makers. Showing power behind the demands may include petitions with many (possibly thousands) of names of supporters, statements of support from opinion leaders or a large turnout at an event. These focused efforts are essential to building sources of power that bolster the advocate-decision maker relationship. Good relationships are the foundation of lobbying and negotiating. Periodic briefings with decision-makers and their staff are one way to strengthen the relationship.[13] Briefings usually feature experts talking about the newest information on the issue.

### TOOL 12. Lobbying

When lobbying, it is important to:

- Have clear agendas and priorities. Be precise and brief, and define the issues and expected outcomes clearly. State what the decision-maker can and should do, and back this up by developing constructive relationships with them.
- Be prepared for a conversation with clear talking points. Try to relate what you are saying to something the decision-maker has done or said. Access to relevant government documents can be helpful. Make it clear that you are willing to help with information and support. Don't avoid controversial topics, but do remain calm during discussions; debate is fine, but avoid being combative.
- When the meeting is finished, be sure to leave brochures, fact sheets or other printed information for future reference. An aide-memoire, summarizing the key points raised with the decision-maker, can be very helpful and is usually also appreciated by the partner.
- After leaving, make notes and evaluate the visit with colleagues. Send a thank you note that summarizes the meeting accurately and as favourably as you can legitimately state it.

Four key steps will help the advocacy strategy advance from lobbying advance to serious negotiation:*

1. *Become familiar with corridors of power:* Learn about the system, procedures, timelines, and key leaders and players.
2. *Classify the players:* Find out where they stand on the issue and how much influence they have either as key decision-makers or in persuading others.
3. *Inform and build relationships:* Through visits and briefings, help the target and/or influential understand the issues. Gain their trust as both a reliable source of quality analysis and as a representative of the stakeholders.
4. *Get attention and show your power:* Time media, outreach and mobilization activities so that decision makers are aware of the support behind your proposal.

*Veneklasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002,

13 *Advocacy Guide*, International Planned Parenthood Federation, 1994

## TOOL 13. Negotiating

Negotiation is a process to resolve conflict. Through the give-and-take of negotiations, groups try to agree on a solution that both sides can accept. Successful negotiation requires a careful appraisal of where one stands on the issue and what can be done to improve the situation.

Negotiation and persuasion capacities, backed by sound knowledge and evidence, are central to influencing decisions. Influencing political players in the real world, however, may require much more than providing the right evidence. It requires building pressure on the decision-makers by adding strength (such as by forming strategic relationships and partnerships), strengthening the capability and actions of pressure groups, and developing public arguments that recognize the government's challenges. This includes being familiar with your opponents' counter-arguments, as well as knowing your allies.

Below are some steps to prepare for negotiation:*

1. *Take stock:* List the skills and experience you to bring to the table. Look at the weaker parts of the proposal and the organization, then you can plan ahead to find ways that overcome the possible deficit.
2. *Learn as much as you can:* Lack of information creates anxiety. Collect the facts that support case, and learn as much as you can about the other group, their circumstances, perspectives and interests. Information and knowledge must be substantial – not absolute or total but sufficient to make a credible judgement. The decision-maker may have a valid point that needs to be addressed, a coalition partner may not believe in everything you do on the specific matter. Find ways to understand and accommodate their concerns.
3. *Develop alternatives:* Use the information acquired to formulate alternatives and assess what the other party will do. This will help to better decide whether to compromise under terms you initiate or walk away.
4. *Get fresh perspectives:* Talking with others whose judgement you trust often helps you see the situation in a new light.

* Kolb, Deborah M., and Judith Williams, *The Shadow Negotiation: How women can master the hidden agendas that determine bargaining success*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2000, p. 48; also see, Fisher, Roger, William Ury and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiation agreement without giving in*, 2nd ed., Houghton Mifflin, New York, 1991.

## Working with the media

The mass media are both a tool and target of advocacy. The media's reach to a large number of people offers a powerful tool to inform and build support around an issue.

Media advocacy is the strategic use of media to communicate with large numbers of people to advance a social or public policy objective or influence public attitudes on an important public matter.[14] There are several tools that can be used to influence the media. The most popular include press releases, events, news conferences, letters to editors, TV or radio interviews, newsletters, briefs, conferences, seminars and workshops. In developing countries, websites, blogs and social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) are becoming increasingly dominant forms of communication. All of these tools can serve to maintain UNICEF's unique brand, which is fundamental in maintaining our credibility as a child rights advocate.

To gain the highest, most effective media coverage, an advocate's message needs to have solid content, framed to draw media attention. Journalists are always

14 Advocacy Institute, Washington, DC, 2004

looking for a fresh breakthrough such as the newest research or an original perspective on a conflict. They know that viewers and readers respond to controversy, cataclysmic events and natural disasters, or an act of injustice. Messages can also be framed around an anniversary, milestone or outstanding achievement.

Translating an individual's story into the broader public issue is another useful strategy for framing messages to get attention. However, it is important to bear in mind that reporting must always fully protect children. For details, see UNICEF's Ethical Guidelines: Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children.[15]

Another way to frame an issue is to name decision makers, particularly those who can and have helped resolve a problem. Naming decision makers who failed to address a problem may also help but could prove controversial and involve risks. It is always best to present a solution to the issue, suggesting practical steps that decision-makers can take.

A gripping story can also be told through compelling visuals, photos, videos or symbols. Using quotes that shape the argument from credible messengers such as academics and decision makers will also boost the advocate's credibility and gather media attention. Hard-hitting numbers – used accurately and responsibly – draw a clear picture. Showing sources and methodology goes a long way towards transparency, and secures an organization's credibility.

**Keep in mind** UNICEF has an excellent Communication Toolkit which has extensive tools, including specific guidelines on how we communicate to the media and the press, in broadcast and web, in emergencies, in editorials and publications, among many other areas.
Please see: http://intranet.unicef.org/docny/commtoolkit.nsf

15 UNICEF's Ethical Guidelines: Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children. www.unicef.org/media/media_tools_guidelines.html

**Question 6. What do we have?**

**Question 7. What do we need?**

An effective advocacy effort takes careful stock of the advocacy resources that are already in place. This includes past advocacy work, previously established alliances, the capacities of staff and other partners, information and political intelligence. In short, you don't start from scratch, you start from building on what you already have. After taking stock of resources, the next step is to identify what you need that isn't yet in place. This means looking at alliances that need to be built and capacities such as outreach, media access and research, which are crucial to any advocacy effort.[16]

Knowing what we have and what we need involves assessing our advantages, challenges, threats, opportunities, next steps[17]

## The ACT-ON Model

Looking inward is crucial for individuals and organizations engaged in and planning advocacy. Advocacy planning begins with understanding who you are and where you stand before attempting to change the world.[18] Assessing internal capacity for UNICEF requires an examination of comparative advantages and disadvantages in advocacy. This relates strongly to the Foundation Areas covered in Chapter 2, each of which adds strength to advocacy.

There is a continual interplay between goals in the 'external world' and being realistic about internal capacities to take on major advocacy efforts. This process fosters accountability, builds responsibility and nurtures a supportive environment. It values experience, including what can be learned even if everything does not work out according to plan. It helps ground people so that they are ready and enthusiastic about their experience and about taking on the next effort.

**Keep in mind** Office coordination and structure are very important in not only designing the advocacy strategy, but also implementing it. UNICEF Mauritania, for example, creatively linked different sectors and programmatic units to more effectively collect evidence, analyse it and communicate it to influence decision makers and the public.

The following tool describes the ACT-ON model for assessing the internal and external advocacy environment in an organization. As the environment keeps changing, it may be used many times during the implementation and management of advocacy.

16 Adapted from Jim Schultz: Strategy Development: Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy. http://www.democracyctr.org/advocacy/strategy.htm.

17 David Cohen, Rosa de la Vega, & Gabrielle Watson (2001) *Advocacy for Social Justice: A Global Action and Reflection Guide.* Advocacy Institute and Oxfam America. Kumarian Press.

18 Veneklasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002.

## TOOL 14. The ACT-ON model of assessing advocacy capacity

The ACT-ON model is a long-term strategy planning tool that helps assess internal and external advocacy capacity, and can be adapted to different cultural contexts. This tool was developed by David Cohen, Kathleen Sheekey and Maureen Burke of the Advocacy Institute and has been used in industrialized and developing countries, urban and rural areas, and even failed states.

**A – Advantages**
UNICEF has many advantages, including a defined responsibility, an earned reputation, strong communications, a wealth of technical knowledge, a strong voice, a history of engaging with children, and strong partnerships (to name a few areas). Utilizing these advantages will significantly increase capacity for effective advocacy.

**C – Challenges**
Taking action to meet or overcome a challenge is a major focus of the ACT-ON model. This begins with an evaluation of the advocacy environment by systematically looking within and externally. This way the organization or group can agree to take the necessary steps internally to meet the challenges it has identified.

**T – Threats**
The idea here is to turn a threat into an opportunity. Adversaries may have more power, but this can be turned into an advantage by meeting internal challenges and finding the most effective public outlets for the advocacy case.

**O – Opportunities**
Find opportunities that protect and advance the advocacy agenda. A key part of the challenge is to use the opportunities to minimize and even negate the threats. This requires an assessment of the advocacy environment, becoming familiar with the formal and informal elements of a political and policy system, as well as the cultural freedoms and inhibitions within a society. Knowing this full range helps an organization take advantage of situations that will advance its advocacy efforts.

**N – Next steps**
Advocacy entails making choices, as all the identified 'next steps' cannot begin at once. In order to prioritize, determine what is critical and where support and time is available. There is always a next step, which is why the issues and organization cycle through phases of renewal. The next steps can connect with any of the advantages, challenges, threats and opportunities.

## Question 8. How do we begin to take action?

What is the most effective way to move the strategy forward? What will bring the right people together, symbolize the larger work ahead and lay the groundwork for reaching the advocacy goal?[19]

Setting goals, interim outcomes and activities, participatory planning and budgeting for advocacy are vital steps towards taking advocacy from planning to action.

## Setting goals, interim outcomes and activities

By this point in advocacy strategy planning, the analysis to underpin an advocacy effort is complete. The analysis now must be pulled together in an action plan. An advocacy action plan frames the advocacy work into clear and results-oriented for implementation. The plan should detail the activities that will be carried out, who is responsible for them, the time by when they will be completed and the resources required to complete them.

The overall time frame for advocacy will be set by the advocacy results desired. Remember that significant amounts of time may be needed to reach the advocacy goal. Advocacy strategies should aim for interim outcomes along the way, which require a shorter amount of time to achieve.

*An advocacy goal* is what the organization hopes to achieve in the long term, possibly over several years; it is the overall change that is desired as a result of advocacy efforts. *Interim outcomes* are shorter-term results that must be achieved in order to reach the advocacy goal. Advocacy strategies usually have multiple interim outcomes that are achieved on the way to that goal. *Activities* are the specific outputs and products which contribute to the interim outcomes, and might include events, conferences, press releases, publications, meetings, etc.

Identifying goals and interim outcomes requires analytical thinking about the issue, the solution and the complex advocacy environment. When identifying goals and interim outcomes, it is important to ask: What needs to be changed? What are the obstacles to achieving that change? What steps can be taken to address these obstacles? Much of this analysis will have already been undertaken throughout the 9 Questions – starting from Question 1 and further developed through the rest of the Questions. Now it is time to pull it all together.

**Keep in mind** Many times, the interim outcomes are modified as advocacy planning and implementation evolves.

**Keep in mind**
The advocacy action plan must also (a) clearly mention the roles and responsibilities that advocates, different sections of UNICEF and partners will take, (b) have flexibility – in staff time and financial resources – to adapt to unexpected advocacy opportunities and challenges.

Goals and interim outcomes should be worded in terms of the desired result or achievement, not in terms of the activity or what will be done. "Raise support for children's rights among key decision-makers," for example, is activity-oriented. A results-oriented outcome is: "Decision-makers X, Y and Z will demonstrate their increased support for children's rights by calling for increased funding for boys' and girls' primary education."

19 Adapted from Jim Schultz: Strategy Development: Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy. http://www.democracyctr.org/advocacy/strategy.htm

## TOOL 15. Being SMART

Advocacy goals and interim outcomes should be SMART: specific; measurable and monitorable; achievable; results oriented, as well as realistic, resourced and relevant; and time-bound. The following is a sample original objective translated into a SMART objective:

***Original objective:*** Improve health services in rural areas to reduce child mortality.

***SMART objective:*** By 2011, 50 per cent of children in five locations in the country will be covered by high-quality essential health services, with the components of these services clearly defined and agreed benchmarks used consistently to assess quality.

**Specific**

- Use change-oriented language and avoid activity-focused language.
- Wherever possible, be clear that your focus is on children.
- Watch out for jargon or rhetoric. Words like 'sensitize' and 'empower' are vague. Say what you mean in the clearest terms possible.
- Be aware of words with multiple meanings, such as reproductive health, accountability, transparency. If you use them, be specific about their meaning. Say why an official is not accountable or a policy or practice is not transparent.

**Measurable and monitorable**

- Be as exact as practical and credible about who, what, where, when and how. When possible, estimate who you are helping, how many people are being helped, what they will be able to do as a result, and the geographical range of your effort.
- When very large numbers are involved, for example, use more manageable numbers, This makes it easier to grasp for both advocates, and target audiences.
- Outcomes that refer to a state of mind and use words like 'empower' are hard to measure because their definitions are imprecise. When using words that refer to a state of mind, ask yourself, What does it mean to be empowered? What does an empowered person do? Use the answers to formulate your outcomes more clearly.

**Achievable**

- The clearer you are about who, what, where, when and how, the more achievable your goals and outcomes will be.

**Results oriented,** as well as realistic, resourced and relevant

- Goals and interim outcomes should be achievable in the planned time frame and reflect the limits of your funding and staff.
- Make sure that the interim outcomes, if achieved, will be sufficient to achieve your advocacy goal.
- Be realistic when you decide how many people you plan to change or influence.
- Advocacy goals and interim outcomes should represent a milestone in the results chain, leading to the achievement of commitments related to the Millennium Declaration and national priorities.

**Time-bound**

- Goals and interim outcomes should include a clear time frame within which change should be achieved. Change within that time frame must also be realistic.

Adapted from: VeneKlasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation,* Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002

Examples of interim outcomes can be both in terms of increased advocacy capacity, as well as audience changes that indicate movement towards advocacy goals. The following worksheet presents examples of advocacy activities, interim outcomes, goals and impacts on children.

## TOOL 15: Advocacy action planning*

### Impacts on Children

Improved Services and Systems  Positive Social and Physical Conditions for Women and Children

### Advocacy Goal

For Policy Development  Placement on the Policy Agenda  Policy Adoption  Policy Blocking  Policy Implementation
Policy Monitoring and Evaluation  Policy Maintenance  New Donors  More or Diversified Funding

**Activities/ Tactics:**

For each item, indicate how the activity contributes to the desired change, and who has responsibility for taking it forward

*Communications and Outreach*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Digital or Internet Based Media/ Social Media | Coalition and Network Building | Briefings/ Presentations |
| Earned Media | Grassroots Organizing and Mobilization | Public Servcie Announcements |
| Media Partnerships | Rallies and Marches | Polling |
| | | Demonstration Projects or Pilots |

*Policy And Politics*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Issue/Policy Analysis and Research | Policymaker and Candidate Education | Litigation or Legal Advocacy |
| Policy Proposal Development | Relationship Building with Decision-makers | Lobbying |
| | Coalition and Network Building | |

**Interim Outcomes:**

*Advocacy Capacity*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Organizational Advocacy Capacity | New Advocates (including unlikely or non-traditional) | New Champions (including policy-makers |
| Organizational or Issue Visibility or Recognition | Partnerships or Alliances | |

*Audience Changes*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Awareness | Public Will | Media Coverage |
| Salience | Political Will | Issue Framing |
| Attitudes or Beliefs | Constituency or Support Base Growth | |

* This research also appears in Coffman, Julia, *A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning,* Harvard Family Research Project, Cambridge, MA, Fall 2009, www.hfrp.org/evaluation/publications-resources/a-user-s-guide-to-advocacy-evaluation-planning, accessed 14 July 2010

## Participation in advocacy planning

The way planning is done will influence the quality of the plan. There are many reasons why participation (within the organization and with partners) is critical for effective advocacy. First, being involved in decision-making is key to empowerment and facilitates ownership, motivation, trust and impact. Participation by staff, board members and constituents in all aspects of advocacy planning helps generate commitment, create shared ideals and directions, speed up action (although it may slow progress initially), surface and cope with conflicts and differences, assess political risk and improve organizational accountability.

Participatory advocacy planning may involve different people at different planning stages, including staff, senior management and board members, affiliates, constituencies (including excluded groups that will benefit from advocacy), children and women, partner organizations, and individual and organizational allies.[20] Child and youth participation in the planning process has been shown to be very effective (for more information on this, see Chapter 8: Working with Children and Young People in Advocacy)

## Budgeting for advocacy

To avoid developing plans that require more resources than one has, it is important to factor-in the budget for advocacy from the outset. When budgeting for advocacy, include the core costs of maintaining and strengthening advocacy capacity, as well as resources needed for specific actions.

Some examples of budget headings include team functioning costs (including travel, staff recruitment, team development, capacity building); strategy development costs (including bringing relevant staff together, facilitation costs); research and communication costs (including conducting a situation analysis, generating credible evidence, and translating findings into communication and outreach materials); advocacy and campaigning costs (including developing partnerships, managing coalitions, membership fees); costs of networking with government at the national and regional levels (including costs of attending conferences and meetings; coalition membership costs; and staffing costs (including consultants).

20 Adapted from: Veneklasen, Lisa, and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Just Associates, Washington, DC, 2002.

## Question 9. How do we tell if it's working?

As with any long journey, progress needs to be checked along the way. It is important to be able to make corrections and discard elements of the strategy that are not working. Periodically revisiting each of the Nine Questions for strategic advocacy planning can be remarkably helpful in the evaluation process.[21] Good monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is the key to knowing if an advocacy strategy is working.

## Advocacy monitoring and evaluation

When reading through the *Advocacy Toolkit*, it is important to keep in mind the difference between monitoring and evaluation. According to UNICEF's *Programme Policy and Procedure Manual:*

> **Monitoring** measures progress in achieving specific results in relation to a strategy's implementation plan.
>
> **Evaluation** attempts to determine as systematically and objectively as possible a strategy's worth or significance.

The toolkit refers to two types of evaluation: (1) *impact evaluation*, which measures a strategy's results for people and communities, and (2) *formative evaluation*, which measures a strategy's quality and efficiency, examining what was done and how well it was done. For advocacy, performance monitoring and formative evaluation are more prevalent than impact evaluation; consequently, many of the M&E ideas presented in this chapter are useful for those purposes.

**Keep in mind** Chapter 4 is devoted entirely to advocacy M&E.

**Keep in mind** Since advocacy is often a long-term effort involving many actors, it requires an M&E approach that recognizes the unique, collaborative and complex nature of advocacy work. Advocacy occurs in a dynamic and fast-changing environment, which requires flexibility and at the same time makes M&E all the more essential.

Adapted from: Global Capacity Building Workshop on Community and Child Centred Advocacy, 'Building Capacity in Advocacy to End Violence against Children', Save the Children, 2006

Impact evaluation is less common because most advocacy evaluation focuses on whether advocacy strategies achieved their goals – changing a system, increasing funding for a policy or programme, changing a policy – rather than extending to impacts such as whether children and women are better off as a result of an advocacy effort. But impact evaluation is an important tool. More attention is needed on monitoring and evaluating what happens after an advocacy goal is achieved, focusing on the implementation and sustainability of that goal and its benefits for children and women.

To get the most out of assessment, advocacy monitoring and evaluation can and should be used for purposes of *strategic learning* – using monitoring to help organizations learn in real time and adapt their strategies to changing circumstances. It means integrating evaluation and evaluative thinking into strategic decision-making and bringing timely data to the table for reflection and action. It means embedding evaluation within the advocacy effort so that it influences the process.[22] Positioned in this way, monitoring and evaluation can be decisive to the success of an advocacy strategy.

21 Adapted from Jim Schultz: Strategy Development: Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy. http://www.democracyctr.org/advocacy/strategy.htm.

22 Coffman, Julia, et al., 'Evaluation for Strategic Learning: Principles, practice, and tools', Center for Evaluation Innovation and Innovation Network, Washington, DC (forthcoming); and Healy, John A., 'What is Strategic Learning and How Do You Develop an Organizational Culture that Encourages It?' The Evaluation Exchange, vol. 11, no. 2, p. 8.

The figure on the next page is a visual menu of possible activities, outcomes, goals and impacts that can be measured for advocacy efforts.[23] Definitions for each component and possible indicators (referred to as 'measures' by national committees) are offered in the tables that follow.[24]

## Sample advocacy activities, interim outcomes, goals, and impacts, and their measurement indicators

| Activities, interim outcomes, goals, impacts | Definition | Indicators |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTIVITIES** | | |
| **Digital or Internet-based media/social media** | Using technologies such as email, websites, blogs, podcasts, text messages, Facebook or Twitter to reach a large audience and enable fast communication | • A new website or web pages developed<br>• Number and frequency of electronic messages sent<br>• Number of list subscribers |
| **Earned media** | Pitching the print, broadcast or digital media to get visibility for an issue with specific audiences | • Number of outreach attempts to reporters<br>• Number of press releases developed and distributed<br>• Number of editorial board meetings held |
| **Media partnerships** | Getting a media company to agree to promote a cause through its communications channels and programming | • Number and types of media partnerships developed<br>• Number and types of distribution outlets accessed through media partnerships |
| **Coalition and network building** | Unifying advocacy voices by bringing together individuals, groups or organizations that agree on a particular issue or goal | • Number of coalition members<br>• Types of constituencies represented in the coalition<br>• Number of coalition meetings held and attendance |
| **Grass-roots organizing and mobilization** | Creating or building on a community-based groundswell of support for an issue or position, often by helping people affected by policies to advocate on their own behalf | • Number and geographical location of communities where organizing efforts take place<br>• Number of community events or trainings held and attendance |
| **Rallies and marches** | Gathering a large group of people for symbolic events that arouse enthusiasm and generate visibility, particularly in the media | • Number of rallies or marches held and attendance<br>• Participation of high-profile speakers or participants |
| **Briefings/ presentations** | Making an advocacy case in person through one-on-one or group meetings | • Number of briefings or presentations held<br>• Types of audiences reached through briefings or presentations<br>• Number of individuals attending briefings and presentations |
| **Public service announcements** | Placing a non-commercial advertisement to promote social causes | • Number of print, radio or online ads developed<br>• Number and types of distribution outlets for ads |
| **Polling** | Surveying the public via phone or online to collect data for use in advocacy messages | • Polls conducted with advocacy audience(s) |
| **Demonstration projects or pilots** | Implementing a policy proposal on a small scale in one or several sites to show how it can work. | • Number of demonstration project or pilot sites<br>• Funding secured for demonstration projects or pilots |
| **Issue/policy analysis and research** | Systematically investigating an issue or problem to better define it or identify possible solutions | • Number of research or policy analysis products developed, e.g., reports, briefs<br>• Number and types of distribution outlets for products<br>• Number of products distributed |
| **Policy proposal development** | Developing a specific policy solution for the issue or problem being addressed | • Policy guidelines or proposals developed<br>• Number of organizations signing onto policy guidelines or proposals |

23 Coffman, Julia, et al.,'Common Language: The Composite Logic Model', Innovation Network, June 2007, www.innonet.org/index.php?section_id=6&content_id=637, accessed 14 July 2010.

24 This information also appears in: Coffman, Julia, *A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning*, Harvard Family Research Project, Cambridge, MA, Fall 2009, www.hfrp.org/evaluation/publications-resources/a-user-s-guide-to-advocacy-evaluation-planning, accessed 14 July 2010.

| Activities, interim outcomes, goals, impacts | Definition | Indicators |
|---|---|---|
| **Policymaker and candidate education** | Telling policymakers and candidates about an issue or position, and about its broad or impassioned support. | • Number of meetings or briefings held with policymakers or candidates<br>• Number of policymakers or candidates reached<br>• Types of policymakers or candidates reached |
| **Relationship building with decision-makers** | Interacting with policymakers or others who have authority to act on the issue. | • Number of meetings held with decision-makers |
| **Litigation or Legal Advocacy** | Using the judicial system to move policy by filing lawsuits, civil actions and other advocacy tactics | • Legal briefs written<br>• Testimony offered |
| **Lobbying** | Attempting to influence law by communicating with a member or employee of a governing body or with a government official or individual who participates in law-making | • Number of meetings with policymakers or candidates<br>• Number of policymakers or candidates reached<br>• Types of policymakers or candidates reached |
| **INTERIM OUTCOMES** | | |
| **Organizational advocacy capacity** | The ability of an organization or coalition to lead, adapt, manage and implement an advocacy strategy | • Increased knowledge about advocacy, mobilizing or organizing tactics<br>• Improved media skills and contacts<br>• Increased ability to get and use data |
| **Partnerships or alliances** | Mutually beneficial relationships with other organizations or individuals who support or participate in an advocacy strategy | • New or stronger organizational relationships developed<br>• New relationships with unlikely partners<br>• New organizations signing on as collaborators<br>• Policy agenda alignment between collaborators<br>• Collaborative actions taken between organizations |
| **New advocates (including unlikely or non-traditional)** | Previously unengaged individuals who take action in support of an issue or position | • New advocates recruited<br>• New constituencies represented among advocates<br>• New advocate actions to support issue |
| **New champions** | High-profile individuals who adopt an issue and publicly advocate for it | • New champions or stakeholders recruited<br>• New constituencies represented among champions<br>• Champion actions, e.g., speaking out or signing on, to support the issue or position |
| **Organizational/ issue visibility or recognition** | Identification of an organization or campaign as a credible source on an issue | • Number of requests for advocate products or information, including downloads or page views of online material<br>• Number and types of invitations for advocates to speak as experts |
| **Awareness** | Audience recognition that a problem exists or familiarity with a policy proposal | • Percentage of audience members with knowledge of an issue<br>• Online activity for portions of website with advocacy-related information |
| **Salience** | The importance a target audience assigns an issue or policy proposal | • Percentage of audience members saying issue is important to them |
| **Attitudes or beliefs** | Target audiences' thoughts, feelings or judgements about an issue or policy proposal | • Percentage of audience members with favourable attitudes towards the issue or interest |
| **Public will** | Willingness of a (non-policymaker) target audience to act in support of an issue or policy proposal | • Percentage of audience members willing to take action on behalf of a specific issue<br>• Attendance at advocacy events, e.g., public forums, marches, rallies |
| **Political will** | Willingness of policymakers to act in support of an issue or policy proposal. | • Number of citations of advocate products or ideas in policy deliberations/policies<br>• Number of government officials who publicly support the advocacy effort<br>• Number of issue mentions in policymaker speeches<br>• Number and party representation of policy sponsors and co-sponsors<br>• Number of votes for or against specific policies |

| Activities, interim outcomes, goals, impacts | Definition | Indicators |
|---|---|---|
| **Constituency or support-base growth** | Increase in the number of individuals who can be counted on for sustained advocacy or action on an issue | • Website activity for portions of website with advocacy-related information<br>• Number of fans, group members or followers on social media websites |
| **Media coverage** | Quantity and/or quality of coverage generated in print, broadcast or electronic media | • Number of media citations of advocate research or products<br>• Number of stories successfully placed in the media<br>• Number of advocate or trained spokesperson citations in the media |
| **Issue reframing** | Changes in how an issue is presented, discussed or perceived | • Number of media articles reflecting preferred issue framing |
| **GOALS** | | |
| **Policy development** | Creating a new policy proposal or policy guidelines | • New proposals or guiding principles developed |
| **Placement on the policy agenda** | Appearance of an issue or policy proposal on the list of issues that policymakers give serious attention | • Policies formally introduced |
| **Policy adoption** | Successful passing of a policy proposal through an ordinance, ballot measure, legislation or legal agreement | • Policies formally established |
| **Policy blocking** | Successful opposition to a policy proposal | • Policies formally blocked |
| **Policy implementation** | Proper implementation of a policy, along with the funding, resources or quality assurance to ensure it | • Policies implemented or administered in accordance with requirements |
| **Policy M&E** | Tracking a policy to ensure it is implemented properly and achieves its intended impacts | • Funding established to formally monitor or evaluate policies |
| **Policy maintenance** | Preventing cuts or other negative changes to a policy | • Funding levels sustained for policies or programmes<br>• Eligibility levels maintained for policies or programmes |
| **New donors** | New public or private funders or individuals who contribute funds or other resources for a cause | • Number of first-time donors<br>• New donors offering financial versus in-kind support<br>• Average dollars given by new donors |
| **More or diversified funding** | Amount of dollars raised and variety of funding sources generated | • Number of overall donors<br>• Types of donors (individual, philanthropic, corporate)<br>• Dollars donated to support advocacy efforts<br>• Revenue earned to support advocacy efforts |
| **IMPACTS (FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN)** | | |
| **Improved services and systems** | Programmes and services that are higher quality and more accessible, affordable, comprehensive or coordinated | • Indicators depend on the specific policy goal; the following are examples:<br>• More programmes offered<br>• Easier access to programmes or services<br>• Higher-quality services<br>• More affordable services |
| **Positive social and Physical conditions** | Better circumstances and surroundings for people, communities or society in general | • Indicators depend on the specific policy goal. For example, Indicators might focus on:<br>• Decreased child mortality<br>• Primary school attendance and enrolment<br>• Access to safe drinking water and sanitation<br>• Fewer children involved in child labour |

## TOOL 17. Using logical frameworks

The example provided is a case study from UNICEF Tanzania

| Results | Measures or indicators | Baseline | Targets | Means of verification | Assumptions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GOALS** | | | | | |
| **What results are needed for success?** | **What measures will indicate success in achieving the outcome?** | **Where is the indicator now?** | **How far do you want to move the indicator?** | **How will you get the indicator data?** | **What could skew the results?** |
| **Goal:** Agenda for Children is reflected in elected government core commitments | # of agenda goals incorporated into post-election government commitments over the next three years | Started at zero, as the agenda is new and elections have not occurred | At least 8 of 10 goals are reflected in core commitments within three years | **Policy tracking** on government core commitments<br><br>**Critical incident timeline** of commitments | Unexpected crises or other events could impact commitment to the agenda once elected |
| **INTERIM OUTCOMES** | | | | | |
| **What results are needed for success?** | **What measures will indicate success in achieving the outcome?** | **Where is the indicator now?** | **How far do you want to move the indicator?** | **How will you get the indicator data?** | **What could skew the results?** |
| **Interim outcome:** Recognition of the Agenda for Children | % of high-profile individuals in Tanzania who know about the agenda post-promotion | Started at zero, as the branding for the agenda is new | 75% of high-profile or individuals asked know the Agenda | **Bellwether interviews** OR **Research panel** of high-profile individuals | Individuals could confuse the Agenda for Children with other child-related advocacy efforts |
| **Interim outcome:** Political candidates take positions on Agenda for Children | # of candidates who sign onto the Agenda for Children before the election | Started at zero candidates | All candidates publicly support the Agenda for Children goals | **Document review** of the signed agenda/ petition | Candidates may want to sign onto some but not all 10 Agenda for Children items |
| **ACTIVITIES** | | | | | |
| **What must be done to achieve the interim outcomes?** | **What measures (outputs) will indicate success on the activity?** | **Where is the output now?** | **How far do you want to move the output?** | **How will you get the output data?** | **What could skew the results?** |
| **Activity:** Develop the Agenda for Children | Agenda developed<br># partners signed on | Started at zero, as agenda had not been developed | Completion of the Agenda for Children<br><br>10 partners signed on | Existence of completed document | Partners might agree on some, but not all 10 agenda investments |
| Activity: Promote the Agenda for Children | # events held<br># promotional materials submitted<br># meetings with candidates for election | Started at zero because agenda was new | 10 events<br>500 promotional materials submitted<br><br>Meetings with all candidates | **Review of UNICEF records** AND **UNICEF tracking** | Budget limitations could impact events and materials distribution |

## CASE STUDY UNICEF Tanzania

This case study aims to show what may be measured and how in the context of real-life UNICEF advocacy efforts. The case study has a brief description of the advocacy effort, the program logic/theory of change that underlines the example, and a hypothetical logframe to illustrate what may be measured and how. Activities, outcomes, indicators are based on information presented earlier in this chapter; methods are discussed in chapter 4 as well as in a special M&E Companion to the Advocacy Toolkit.

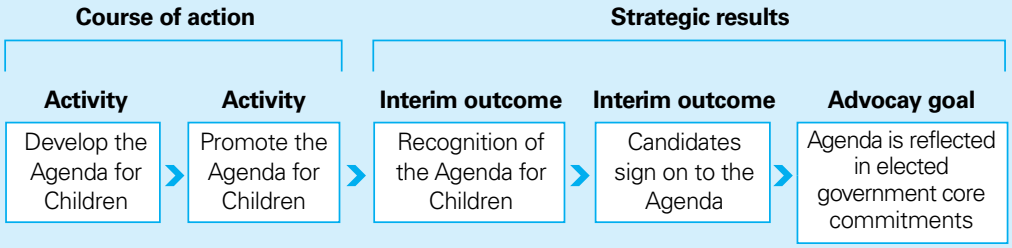
**Using elections as entry points**

In many countries, including the United Republic of Tanzania, UNICEF has used elections as an opportunity for defining and packaging a five-year advocacy agenda for children. The agenda to advance specific priorities for children is non-partisan; in effect, the issues are running for election.

In the case of Tanzania, this has become an opportunity for advancing child participation as well as collaboration with a wide range of partners on the Agenda for Children 2010 – which packages all of UNICEF's key advocacy goals within one brand. The goal is to have issues from the agenda reflected in political party manifestos. The Agenda for Children 2010 is expected to become part of the core commitments of the elected Government, and this will then be tracked in the future.*

**Programme logic/theory of change**

UNICEF Tanzania viewed upcoming presidential and legislative elections as a time-limited window of opportunity in the political environment – or 'policy window' – that could be capitalized on to draw visibility to their issues and push for changes or reforms. In the section on theories of change in Chapter 3, this theory was referred to as the 'policy windows approach'. The figure below illustrates the logic of UNICEF Tanzania's approach:




Ultimately, UNICEF Tanzania's goal was to get their policy agenda for children, which lays out a series of specific recommended investments, incorporated into government commitments and action. They saw upcoming elections as an opportunity to educate candidates and political parties in the country on those issues and recommendations, and to urge them to take a public position on them. Specifically, UNICEF Tanzania wanted the candidates in the elections to sign a commitment to back their agenda.

To gain visibility for the agenda, UNICEF Tanzania packaged it in a way that was easy to understand and follow, with 10 recommended investments – the Agenda for Children. Packaging also made it more difficult for candidates to support some, but not all, recommended investments. The agenda slogan was "Tuwape nafasi viongozi wanaojali watoto kwa kutetea haki zao" (Let's give a chance to leaders who care about children by defending their rights). Advocates promoted the agenda in multiple ways, including having children as spokespersons. Every month, UNICEF Tanzania published the names of candidates who pledged their support.

* As discussed by UNICEF's Policy Advocacy Community of Practice

## 3.3 Wrapping up the Nine Questions

Following is a tool which can help collect, organize and summarize information generated as a result of analysis going through the Nine Questions.

### TOOL 18 Advocacy strategy planning worksheet:

**Impacts:** What we want to have happen...

**Advocacy Goal:** Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Results-based, Time-bound...

**Interim Outcomes**: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Results-based, Time-bound...

| | |
|---|---|
| **Who can make it happen?** | Target audiences... |
| **What do they need to hear?** | Primary messages and secondary messages for each target audience ... |
| **Who do they need to hear it from?** | Messengers for each target audience (individuals and institutions)... |
| **How can we get them to hear it?** | Approaches & opportunities (lobbying, campaigning, media, partners, etc.)... |
| **What do we have/ need to develop?** | Capacity assessment and how to address gaps... |
| **How can we begin?** | Advocacy action plan (activities that link to interim outcomes and advocacy goals, and who is responsible for doing them)... |
| **How do we tell if it is working?** | M&E plan (users of M&E data, how will they use M&E data, data collection tools, and responsibilities, indicators, targets, assumptions)... |

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Humanitarian advocacy: meeting human needs in emergencies

Humanitarian advocacy is understood to constitute deliberate efforts, based on demonstrated evidence, aimed at persuading decision-makers to adopt policies and take actions to promote and protect the rights of children and women in humanitarian situations.* It aims to communicate the legitimacy and primacy of their perspectives and helps to address critical humanitarian programming or policy gaps. The revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) define a humanitarian situation as any circumstance where humanitarian needs are sufficiently large and complex to require significant external assistance and resources, and where a multi-sectoral response is needed, with the engagement of a wide range of international humanitarian actors. Likewise, advocacy is also a critical part of UNICEF's response in post-crisis and fragile situations, which pose challenges distinct from development or humanitarian contexts.

Humanitarian and post-crisis situations, whether conflict or disasters, also pose special urgencies that require a strategic, coordinated and time-bound approach to country-specific advocacy on hot-button issues. This requires the coordination of actors across all levels of the organization.

Following the institutional imperative for UNICEF to undertake humanitarian advocacy as stated above, advocacy must be an integral part of UNICEF's overall humanitarian response. It should build off existing advocacy structures within and across offices. Like advocacy in other situations, humanitarian advocacy can be public or private – or a combination of both. A structured, strategic approach to advocacy should also include advocacy by COs, ROs and HQ that is linked and mutually reinforcing. But without careful planning and coordination, advocacy at one level can undermine efforts at another level.

**Opportunities and risks of humanitarian advocacy**

Strategically planned humanitarian advocacy can achieve:

- **Humanitarian access.** Advocacy for humanitarian space (including the security of aid workers) can create access for UNICEF and partners to deliver humanitarian assistance. Adhering to humanitarian principles is a critical risk management strategy to ensure security and delivery
- **Programmatic goals.** Advocacy has been used with armed forces and non-state entities to achieve, for example, action plans for the release of children from armed groups,** and their subsequent reintegration into communities.
- **Respect for human rights.** This may be focused on very basic protection issues, such as the right to receive relief assistance, or it may be much more comprehensive
- **International and national awareness and action** to improve the situation of children and women within a specific context
- **Regional and cross-border strategies.** Using credible evidence, advocacy can mobilize the resources to scale-up programming at national and regional levels for cross-border approaches to a problem. Evidence can also strengthen advocacy for prevention and preparedness as per the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative
- **Policy development and change.** Emergencies may create opportunities to create or amend government policies, budget decisions and legislation that may have long-term benefits
- **Entry 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 claim their rights.

* Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (forthcoming), UNICEF, 2010, and from Saving Lives, Protecting Children: Advocacy in Emergencies, UNICEF, 2008.

** In certain situations, advocacy may overlap with humanitarian negotiation and it will be necessary to consult the U.N. Guidelines on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups; http://ochaonline.un.org/humanitariannegotiations/Documents/Guidelines.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Humanitarian advocacy *cont.*

All advocacy initiatives carry some type of risks, which may be heightened in humanitarian and post-crisis situations. UNICEF, in collaboration with its partners, will take due account of the possible adverse effects of engaging in advocacy strategies on staff security, country programmes and vulnerable populations, as per the UNICEF's Enterprise Risk Management*, which makes managers accountable to implement due diligence to assess risk and implement effective risk management strategies; this is true for all advocacy, including humanitarian. Some threats associated with poorly planned advocacy include:

- Reduced access;
- Security threats to staff and programmes;
- Security threats to local population;
- Loss of UNICEF legitimacy and influence, including acceptance of UNICEF as an impartial actor;
- Distortion of messages;
- Misunderstanding or conflict among partners and internally within the organization;
- Misallocated resources.

**Standards for humanitarian advocacy**

The revised CCCs, forthcoming, lay out criteria for advocacy for children and women, stating advocacy:

- Should be context-specific and, when possible, evidence-based, and should target the full range of stakeholders, including governments, policymakers, international organizations and non-governmental entities.
- Should be based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child – including its two additional protocols – the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, supported by International Humanitarian Law and other international legal instruments, peace agreements, and other commitments made by governments and nongovernmental entities.
- Yields the best results when undertaken on a collective basis and in partnership with others.
- Leads to specific actions targeted to attract greater political, human and financial support; facilitates better humanitarian access; promotes adherence to international laws and standards; and leads to accountability for perpetrators of child rights violations. In a humanitarian situation, the absence of advocacy may have a direct impact on the ability of UNICEF and its partners to deliver services.

**Humanitarian principles**

Further parameters to humanitarian advocacy are provided by the core humanitarian principles, as laid out by the General Assembly and under International Humanitarian Law:**

- **Humanity:** human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found;
- **Impartiality:** ensure that assistance is delivered to all those who are suffering without any form of discrimination; and
- **Neutrality:** a commitment not to take sides in hostilities.

The challenge is that UNICEF's acceptance of these principles does not in itself provide the grounds for conducting humanitarian advocacy. Rather they are the parameters by which UNICEF must work in order for its efforts – including advocacy – to be considered *humanitarian*. Doing so requires applying the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality in the organization's actions, and influencing the perception of how others view those actions. UNICEF can control the former, and thus shape the latter. Such a cohesive approach to advocacy must be coordinated across the organization (CO, RO, HQ), as advocacy approaches in one context set precedents for other contexts, mutually reinforcing or possibly creating additional risks.

* UNICEF Intranet, http://www.intranet.unicef.org/exd/Implement360.nsf/root/Page0102. For more on advocacy risks, responses and controls, see the 'UNICEF Risk Reference Guide', including the Risk and Control Library.

** See GAR 46/182 (1991); and UNICEF's *Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action* (CCCs), Section 1.6. In addition, the principles of Do no harm; Accountability; Participation, and Respect for culture and custom are considered good practice by the humanitarian community.

4

# Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy

**“It is not where you start but how high you aim that matters for success.”** *– Nelson Mandela*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2010-1606/.ZAK

# 4 Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy

**Monitoring and evaluation can shape and transform an advocacy strategy and help ensure results have the maximum effect. Chapter 4 outlines basic steps in planning monitoring and evaluation for advocacy and covers:**

- **Distinctive features of monitoring and evaluation for advocacy.**
- **Five questions for planning advocacy monitoring and evaluation.**
- **Special Focus on equity, as well as humanitarian advocacy monitoring and evaluation.**
- **Following up with next steps.**

This chapter is a condensed version of the full M&E Companion to the Advocacy Toolkit, which contains detailed explanation of the seventeen data collection tools for measuring advocacy outputs, outcomes and impacts.

## 4.1 Distinctive features of advocacy monitoring and evaluation

Planning for evaluation should occur at the start of an advocacy effort, ideally while the strategy is being developed or soon after. This is based on the proven premise that evaluation can be a key resource when integrated into advocacy efforts because it supports and informs the work as it evolves. Among elements that distinguish Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for advocacy:

**Time frames can be unpredictable.** Achieving an advocacy effort's goals, particularly for policy advocacy, often takes many years. M&E data are often required before goals are achieved.

**Strategies and milestones shift.** Advocacy strategy evolves over time, and activities and desired outcomes can shift quickly. For M&E it means making adjustments so it is more relevant and realistic within an advocacy context.

**Demonstration of contribution is expected, not attribution.** When the purpose of evaluating advocacy is to determine impact, attribution is not possible. Therefore, evaluations that examine the link between advocacy efforts and their results have adopted a standard of contribution over attribution.

**Keep in mind** UNICEF advocacy is human-rights based and adheres to interconnected values – recognizing the universality of human rights, honouring diversity, ensuring resources are distributed equitably, and making sure that the people who are affected by an issue are represented during decision-making and are able to advocate on their own behalf. UNICEF advocacy is necessarily evaluated according to the extent that it advances rights-based values. This approach, called values-based evaluation, means judging how well values are integrated into practice, as well as using values to shape how evaluations are conducted.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## The equity focus in monitoring and evaluating advocacy[1]

An equity focus in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of advocacy efforts must address several issues. The most important are the following:

**1. Examine equity evidence when developing the advocacy positions**

When a literature review reveals that the evidence base is lacking, new work may be needed before an advocacy position can be confidently developed. Pilot projects are a recommended solution. These can be explicitly designed to attain or to measure equity effects. Managing good pilot projects requires good M&E inputs. Consult the UNICEF guidance on pilot programming at Section 18 of Chapter 6 at PPP Manual. For more general guidance on generating evidence for advocacy, see Section 3.2 Question 1.

**2. Model equity outcomes during advocacy planning**

Prospective research on equity at the planning stage helps to identify determinants of inequality and the effects of the desired policy change. Once there is agreement on what the likely outcomes are and how they serve equity objectives, the advocacy campaign has a powerful communications tool. Modeling normally requires skilled support and a robust data base to use for inputs. Fortunately, many assumptions can be tested and hypothetical data sets can be employed in many cases.

**3. Advocate for employing equity-focused M&E methods to gather evidence when policies shift.**

- *Special Research Techniques:* Special data gathering and analysis techniques may be needed to understand the conditions of extremely disadvantaged, hidden, and marginal populations that often are not reliably reached via standard research and sampling techniques. See, for example: *www.essex.ac.uk/summerschool/media/pdf/outlines/1q.pdf.*

- *Management Information Systems (MIS) and discrete research efforts.* Existing sectoral MIS data (e.g., routine health data) can be re-analyzed with an equity lens by disaggregating data by relevant variables. However, if MIS data does not cover equity concerns, special studies may be needed.
- *Participatory methods.* Some equity analyses can be conducted without participatory methods (e.g., projecting the impact of scaling-up proven strategies). But participatory M&E methods can be important for both getting valid data and for raising the voices of those affected by disparities. Guidance on participatory approaches is at: *www.mymande.org/?q=virtual_search&x=admin .*

**4. Make sure the future equity analysis plans are holistic and realistic**

- *Intent***.** A heightened focus on equity does not reduce the importance of other advocacy goals. This is especially the case if the original advocacy plan did not have specific equity concerns. In such instances, the advocacy effort should be assessed against its original goals, as well as against equity goals.
- *Measurement norms.* Special attention must be given to deciding how to interpret equity data, especially in determining whether adequate progress is being made (impact). For example, entrenched social discrimination may mean that a 5% improvement over the baseline is excellent. Evaluators, advocates, and donors have to be realistic about what is possible, particularly within brief timeframes. Universalist criteria should not be applied to the judgment of results (e.g. anything less than perfect equity is not a success) without strong justification.

1 Based on input from Sam Bickel and Kseniya Temnenko, Evaluation Office, UNICEF New York

**Assessing progress is important, not just impact.** Advocacy M&E typically focuses on the advocacy journey rather than just the destination. In addition to demonstrating progress, this approach reduces the risk that the evaluation will conclude that the whole advocacy effort was a failure if advocacy goals are not achieved within the evaluation's time frame.

**Context should always be considered.** Context matters when choosing advocacy strategies. It also matters when choosing M&E approaches and interpreting evaluation data.

## 4.2 Five questions for planning advocacy monitoring and evaluation

This section presents five essential questions for all monitoring and evaluation planning:

**M&E Question 1.** Who are the monitoring and evaluation users?

**M&E Question 2.** How will monitoring and evaluation be used?

**M&E Question 3.** What evaluation design should be used?

**M&E Question 4.** What should be measured?

**M&E Question 5.** What data collection tools should be used?

### M&E Question 1. Who are the monitoring and evaluation users?

All M&E planning should start with an understanding of who will use the information generated and how they will use it.[1] Getting clarity on these elements up front will ensure the evaluation delivers the right kind of information when it is needed. Potential users include:

*UNICEF offices,* including country offices, regional offices, national committees and headquarters. Monitoring and evaluation can help all offices learn, adapt and remain nimble in the midst of the constantly changing policy environment in which we work. Monitoring and evaluation can also help UNICEF offices demonstrate the value of their advocacy work.

*External donors.* Like advocates, donors may want feedback on progress as advocacy efforts unfold so that they can know how and where advocates are making progress or having an impact.

*Partners*, e.g., government bodies, international organizations, the media, civil society organizations and communities. They may also want feedback on progress. In fact, such data may serve as a motivator and help keep them engaged over time.

Data collected could also become part of the advocacy strategy. Evidence that the effort is making headway can be newsworthy and help push advocacy efforts closer to their goals.

1 Patton, Michael Quinn, *Utilization-Focused Evaluation,* 4th ed., Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2008

### M&E Question 2. How will monitoring and evaluation be used?

Advocacy monitoring and evaluation within UNICEF is generally conducted to establish accountability, inform decision-making or encourage national and global learning. These purposes are consistent with UNICEF's *Programme Policy and Procedure Manual.*

**Accountability** means using evaluation to examine whether a case can be made that an advocacy effort produced its intended results or moved substantially closer to that end. It can also mean using performance monitoring to ensure that advocacy efforts are doing what they said they would do, and that resources are being managed well.

**Informing decision-making** means providing data that will inform and strengthen advocacy efforts while they are happening. As data are returned, they can be used to inform what strategies or tactics are working well and where midcourse corrections may be needed.

**National and global learning** refers to using monitoring and evaluation to inform general advocacy practice and to generate lessons learned. It means answering questions about what did and did not work.

UNICEF's *Guidance on Prioritization of Major Evaluations at the Decentralized Level* further specifies criteria and process for identification of major evaluations.

### M&E Question 3. What evaluation design should be used?

An evaluation's design is the overall methodological plan for how information will be gathered. It defines how the evaluation will respond to the questions users want answered. Three categories of designs are available for use in evaluation – experimental, quasi-experimental and non-experimental.

**Experimental designs** use random assignment to assign individuals to intervention and control groups[2] to examine an intervention's impact for those who do and do not participate. **Quasi-experimental designs** construct comparison groups or other types of counterfactuals when random assignment is not possible for either ethical or practical reasons. Both designs are difficult to use in an advocacy context since the concepts of defined and bounded interventions, random assignment and control or comparison groups do not translate well to an advocacy context. It is possible, however, to use quasi-experimental designs to assess specific tactics used by advocates. This type of design has been used, for example, to evaluate media outreach or to compare results in different communities – but only when evaluators can compare advocacy efforts across different sites, which is difficult because context is so important with advocacy.

**Non-experimental designs** are the most common approach for evaluating advocacy efforts. Non-experimental designs, like experimental and quasi-experimental approaches, examine relationships between variables and draw inferences about the possible effects of an intervention, but they do not have counterfactuals that control subjects or conditions. It would be an error to assume that non-experimental designs cannot be rigorous or robust. Non-experimental approaches can be a strong design option, particularly when they incorporate practices that

2 Also called the counterfactual, or the condition in which an intervention is absent

promote rigour. Several practices can bolster the validity and credibility of data and findings, particularly when non-experimental evaluations rely primarily on qualitative data.[3] They include the use of:

- Mixed methods – using both qualitative and quantitative data collection approaches in the same evaluation.
- Triangulation – using two or more designs, methods or data sources to study the same question or outcome.
- Validation – checking back with key informants on the accuracy of data and reasonableness of interpretations.
- Peer review – asking other evaluation experts to critically review evaluation methods and findings.
- Counterfactual thinking – committing to exploring whether alternative explanations could have caused or contributed to observed relationships or outcomes.

**Keep in mind** Rigour does not only mean using experimental or quasi-experimental designs that use control groups or conditions. These designs typically are not feasible with advocacy, and using designs inappropriately actually signals a lack of methodological rigour.

The decision about how the evaluation will be used (M&E Question 2) has significant implications for the evaluation's design. The choice on use affects what gets measured, how it gets measured and when data are reported.

Monitoring and evaluation efforts can have more than one use, and therefore can incorporate more than one design. In deciding which design to use, the options are not mutually exclusive. With non-experimental designs, the decision is less about which approach to use than it is about which *combination* of approaches to use. In addition, some designs can be employed for more than one type of use. For purposes of clarity, however, each design is discussed where it fits best in terms of the three types of evaluation uses.

### Designs categorized by three types of use

| Evaluation uses | Accountability | Informing decision-making | National and global learning |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overall designs | • Quasi-experimental<br>• Non-experimental | • Non-experimental | • Non-experimental |
| Specific design options | • Single- or multiple-case studies<br>• General elimination method<br>• Contribution analysis<br>• Participatory performance story reporting<br>• Cost-benefit analysis | • Developmental evaluation<br>• Real-time evaluation and rapid assessment (for humanitarian advocacy) | • Success (or failure) case studies |
| Best time to conduct | During or after implementation | During implementation | After implementation |

3 Bamberger, M., J. Rugh and L. Mabry, RealWorld Evaluation, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2006

### Accountability

Evaluation designs for accountability generally aim to determine if a relationship can be established between an advocacy effort and its observed results. As mentioned earlier, determining causality using experimental designs is not possible with advocacy. As such, evaluations that examine the link between advocacy efforts and their results have adopted a standard of contribution over attribution. Contribution means determining if a plausible and defensible case can be made that advocacy efforts played a meaningful role in producing their intended results. Several non-experimental design options are available for examining accountability.

- **Single- or multiple-case studies.** Case studies are one of the most common advocacy evaluation designs. They allow for the examination of context, causal processes, results, and unintended results or unexpected consequences. Case studies typically look at different aspects of the advocacy effort from beginning to end and gather data from a broad range of stakeholders either involved in the effort or targeted by it. The key advantage of using case studies is that they tell a full and in-depth story about what happened rather than provide isolated data points that tell only part of the story or do not consider the context in which the advocacy effort occurred.

  Case studies can use a single-case or a multiple-case design (also called comparative case studies). Multiple-case study designs can be used when advocacy efforts take place in more than one location or context. Comparisons across the cases identify either consistent patterns, or new or divergent themes.[4]

- **General elimination method.** This approach is used with a case study that happens after an advocacy effort is finished to determine whether a plausible and defensible case can be made that the advocacy effort in fact had an impact (to determine contribution). The general elimination method begins with an intervention (advocacy) and searches for an effect. It gathers evidence to eliminate alternative or rival explanations for effects until the most compelling explanation remains.

- **Contribution analysis.** This approach determines whether a credible and plausible case can be made that an advocacy effort contributed to its policy-related outcomes or impacts.[5] The process has six iterative steps.[6] The first step is mapping advocacy results using a logic model, outcomes chain or similar approach. The next step is gathering existing evidence on those results. Third, alternative explanations for the results are explored to determine whether they might provide a better explanation of the observed results than the advocacy effort being examined. Fourth, a 'performance story' is developed that lays out the context, planned and actual accomplishments, lessons learned and main alternative explanations for the results, along with why those alternative explanations should not be accepted. The fifth step seeks additional evidence where alternative evidence cannot be discounted or where the contribution argument is questionable. Finally, the performance story is revised and strengthened

4 Yin, Robert K., *Case Study Research: Design and methods,* 1st ed., Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, CA, 1984 [http://www.getcited.org/pub/102366350]

5 Mayne, John, 'Contribution Analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect', *ILAC Brief No. 16,* Institutional Learning and Change Initiative, Rome, 2008

6 Mayne, John, 'Addressing Attribution through Contribution Analysis: Using performance measures sensibly, *The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation,* vol. 16, no. 1, 2001, pp. 1–24.

where possible. If this cannot be done, either more evaluation work is required or the conclusion is that a plausible and defensible case *cannot* be made that the advocacy effort contributed to the observed results.

- **Participatory performance story reporting.** Performance stories are short reports about how efforts contributed to their intended outcomes. They attempt to answer questions about impact. The stories can vary in format, but they are designed to be concise, link to a plausible results map or logic model, feature empirical evidence to support claims made in the story, and discuss context.[7]

  The technique has two main elements: (1) a five-step process for generating the performance story, and (2) a five-part structure for reporting it. Applied to advocacy efforts, the stories include a narrative to explain the context and advocacy rationale; a logframe for the effort; a narrative to describe what was learned and how it matters; short stories of significant changes observed; and an index on the sources of evidence used. A unique feature of this process is the *outcomes panel.* This panel consists of people with scientific, technical or substantive knowledge that relates to the issue on which the advocacy effort is focused. The panel determines whether the performance stories have, in fact, built a credible case that the advocacy effort contributed to its outcomes.[8]

- **Cost-benefit analysis.** This approach attempts to document the financial benefits associated with the long-term impacts of advocacy on people's lives. Cost-benefit analysis determines whether societal welfare has increased in the aggregate, i.e., whether people are better off because of an advocacy effort. It consists of three steps: (1) determining an advocacy effort's benefits and placing a dollar value on them; (2) calculating the advocacy effort's costs; and (3) comparing the benefits and the costs. Identifying and measuring costs, and quantifying and placing a dollar value on the benefits, are significant challenges. While direct costs are often relatively easy to account for, indirect costs (such as costs for collaboration), and intangible costs (those for which the evaluator either cannot assign an explicit price or chooses not to) are more difficult. Identifying benefits can also be challenging.

  Unlike programmes, which have defined populations, advocacy is typically done for the broader public good. Also, as with costs, there are direct, indirect and intangible benefits. Identifying specific benefits, much less placing a dollar value on them, can be extremely difficult. When identifying benefits or costs, it is important to state clearly how they are being measured and to list any assumptions made in the calculation of the dollars involved.[9]

7 Dart J., and J. Mayne, J., Performance Story', in Sandra Mathison, editor, *Encyclopedia of Evaluation,* Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2005, pp. 307–308.

8 For more information, see: Clear Horizon, 'Participatory Performance Story Reporting', Chelsea, Australia, 2008, www.clearhorizon.com.au/flagship-techniques/participatory-performance-story-reportin/, accessed 14 July 2010.

9 Kee, James Edwin, 'At What Price? Benefit-cost analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis in program evaluation', *The Evaluation Exchange,* vol. 5, no. 2 & 3, 1999, www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/methodology-15/at-what-price-benefit-cost-analysis-and-cost-effectiveness-analysis-in-program-evaluation, accessed 14 July 2010.

### Informing decision-making

Evaluation to inform decision-making helps organizations or groups learn in real time and adapt their strategies to the changing circumstances around them. It is an essential part of the ongoing advocacy strategy, to be integrated throughout the decision-making process.

- **Developmental evaluation** is one possible design for this process, because it works well with complicated and complex strategies that evolve over time. The approach features internal or external evaluators who develop long-term relationships with advocates. Evaluators become part of the advocacy team to ask evaluative questions, bring data and logic to the table, and facilitate data-based assessments and decision-making in the unfolding process of advocacy.[10] Developmental evaluation provides feedback, generates learning, and either supports strategy decisions or affirms changes to them.

Choices about whether to use this approach should be based on judgements about the level of independence needed in the evaluation. Evaluators who are embedded may be viewed as having less objectivity and neutrality.

### National and global learning

These evaluations generate knowledge that will be useful to individuals beyond those who are involved with the advocacy effort. Although replicating whole advocacy strategies is not advisable because what worked in one country or political context is not likely to work the same way in another, advocacy practitioners and donors want lessons and ideas about approaches to try or avoid in situations when circumstances are similar.

- **Success (or failure) case studies.** These are post hoc analyses of advocacy efforts to determine what contributed to their success or failure. The Success Case Method is a particular type of success case study that combines systematic and rigorous case study methodology with storytelling, and reports results that stakeholders can easily understand and believe.[11] Case studies can be single- or multiple-case. If multiple-case designs are used, it may be useful to compare a context where the advocacy effort was successful to where it was not. For more information on documenting, innovations, lessons learned and good practices, see Chapter 5 Managing Knowledge in Advocacy

**Keep in mind** Decisions about what to measure should be made during advocacy evaluation planning (specifically Question 8 in Chapter 3 on action planning). Examples and definitions of advocacy activities, outcomes, goals, impacts and suggest respectful indicators are presented in Question 9 in Chapter 3.

## M&E Question 4. What should be measured?

The next step in the monitoring and evaluation process is determining what elements of the advocacy strategy should be measured. Four aspects of advocacy efforts can be measured:

*Activities/tactics* are what advocates do to move their audiences and achieve their goals; national committees use the term 'strategies' to describe activities. The results of activities are commonly known as *outputs* – they are 'measures of effort' and count what and how much advocacy activities or tactics produce or accomplish.

10 Patton, Michael Quinn, 'Evaluation for the Way We Work', *The Nonprofit Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 1, Spring 2006, pp. 28–33.

11 Brinkerhoff, Robert O., *The Success Case Method: Find out quickly what's working and what's not,* Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, 2003.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Evaluation designs for humanitarian advocacy

Advocacy in the humanitarian realm is not limited to the emergency response itself. Rather, it begins before the onset of the emergency – for example, in advancing policies that respect human rights should an emergency to occur – and continues after the response, such as when humanitarian actors negotiate for the safe return of emergency-affected populations to their communities or on post-conflict policies to address the root causes conflict. Evaluation can thus be useful at all of these time points, both as a source of accountability and learning.

Many of the challenges associated with the evaluation of advocacy efforts are the same as in other contexts, but several others are arguably unique or more pronounced in humanitarian action. These include, among others:

**The speed of decision-making and the urgency of information needs.** During the emergency, there is a need for well-reasoned suggestions for specific, concrete entry points for potential advocacy efforts moving forward, based on evidence of the most critical potential threats to children's and women's rights. However, owing to the nature of emergency and post-emergency settings, it is often difficult to quickly assess the state of affairs in a systematic way so as to inform these decisions.

**Inherent volatility and complexity.** This chief characteristic of emergency and post-emergency settings can lead to uncertainty as to whom the targets of advocacy are. This poses difficulties not only in conducting advocacy in the first instance – and hence in demonstrating its effects in light of a rapidly changing landscape – but also in accessing the most qualified stakeholders who can shed light to the evaluation team on UNICEF's efforts.

**Heightened stakes of decision-making.** Even the best-laid advocacy efforts can have missteps, resulting in unintended negative effects of advocacy such as perceived compromises of adherence to humanitarian principles (such as impartiality and neutrality) and hence diminished reputation among some stakeholders. The challenge for evaluators in these contexts is to 'unpack' the manifold influences on the effects of advocacy decisions, including those that lay outside decisionmakers' control – and to not unduly judge decisionmakers for taking risks on the best information available.

**The sensitivity of humanitarian advocacy.** Much of the advocacy undertaken in emergency and post-emergency settings occurs "offline." For evaluators, this can lead to a lack of information, making it difficult to establish causal connections and attribute positive outcomes to UNICEF's work. By extension, this can lead to sensitivities around the open sharing of evaluation findings and recommendations.

**The multiple actors involved in humanitarian response.** UNICEF rarely if ever acts alone in emergency and post-emergency settings, and advocacy efforts are no exception in this regard. Other humanitarian agencies, such as UNHCR and WFP as well as donors, undertake advocacy as well, often in partnership with UNICEF. In conjunction with the foregoing challenges described, this challenge can add to the difficulties in ascribing positive changes (or, alternatively, the lack of positive changes) to UNICEF alone.

Therefore, some of the overarching evaluation questions surrounding humanitarian advocacy to ask include the following (this is not an exhaustive list, but merely provides a sampling of potential questions):

- Prior to an emergency, what efforts have been made at various levels of the Organization to secure or strengthen the protection of civilians' rights (and particularly children's and women's rights) *in the event of emergency?* How closely aligned are these with the most critical protection gaps foreseen prior to an emergency?

Based on significant input from Robert McCouch (Evaluation Office) and Rafael Hermoso (Office of Emergency Programmes), UNICEF.

**SPECIAL FOCUS cont.**

- To what extent have context and conflict analyses, as well as needs assessments, systematically identified potential entry points for advocacy, as well as key target audiences and potential partners in these efforts? How timely, rigorous, impartial and neutral have these analyses been in order to inform advocacy efforts in the best possible way, and how useful have they been to those spearheading advocacy efforts?
- What tangible and intangible results have advocacy efforts contributed to (e.g., in securing humanitarian access, enactment and enforcement of policies to address root causes of the emergency, obtain regional agreements on cross-border returns, and so on), and how successful have they been overall?
- How effectively has UNICEF partnered with others toward shared advocacy objectives (e.g., to ensure maximum efficiency in efforts, coordination of messaging, avoidance of duplication, and so on)?
- What have been the main barriers preventing such advocacy and/or successful outcomes of it? To what extent are these internal (within UNICEF's control and therefore fixable) as opposed to external (and a function of the operating environment in which they are undertaken)?
- How successfully has the advocacy effort been managed – for example, by remaining cognizant of political sensitivities and risks, as well as the potential payoff to appropriate risk-taking?
- What if any unintended consequences, positive or negative, have resulted from advocacy efforts? How well have the latter been handled? To what extent have successes, whether intended or unintended, been brought to scale and/or translated into political capital where possible?

In those instances where evaluation takes place during the emergency itself, when data must be gathered quickly, possible methods for evaluation are two: *real-time evaluation and rapid assessment.* In addition, Post-Disaster or Post-Conflict Needs Assessments (PDNAs or PCNAs) can begin very early during the emergency and start looking at longer-term recovery/reconstruction needs. PCNA would include a conflict analysis and would typically look at issues where advocacy might be required. *Real-time evaluation (RTE),* undertaken within 3 to 4 months after a crisis emerges, involves evaluators systematically collecting and processing data as the crisis unfolds, typically using a mix of methods, and then hold an interactive debriefing when the evaluation ends. To date, few RTEs have focused explicitly on advocacy, and this remains an area in need of further development. Rapid assessment occurs within a very short time frame of a few days to a few weeks, and involves evaluators working in teams using a multiple methods, e.g., interviews, surveys, focus groups and transect walks (researchers walk through an area to make observations and talk informally with community members). The data they gather is disseminated quickly to inform decision-making. Rapid assessments can be particularly useful for examining whether advocacy efforts are meeting the requirements of a human rights-based approach.

*Interim outcomes* are strategic results achieved between activities/outputs and advocacy goals; national committees use the term 'goals' to describe interim outcomes. Advocacy goals can sometimes take years to achieve; interim outcomes signal important progress along the way. Unlike outputs, which are measures of effort, indicators associated with interim outcomes are 'measures of effect' and demonstrate changes that happen, usually with target audiences, as a result of advocacy activities.

*Goals* indicate what the advocacy strategy is aiming to accomplish in the policy or funding environment; national committees use the term 'objectives' for goals.

*Impacts* are the big changes and benefits being sought for women and children, or in services and systems, as a result of advocacy goals. Impacts signal what will happen after an advocacy goal is achieved.

**Keep in mind** Prioritize what will be measured. Rarely are enough evaluation resources available to collect data on every part of the advocacy strategy. Many advocacy efforts have few staff and few resources for monitoring and evaluation. In addition, many do not want to engage in time-intensive evaluations. It is important to step back from the strategy and prioritize the elements that are most essential; to do this, the following questions should be considered: What do monitoring and evaluation users want to know? What is the advocacy effort's unique contribution? What is the evaluation's time frame? Who will do the evaluation?

## M&E Question 5:
## What data collection tools should be used?

The fifth step in M&E planning requires decisions about what data collection tools to use. These choices define *how* data will be collected. Like all evaluations, advocacy evaluations can draw on a familiar list of traditional data collection tools, including: surveys or interviews, document review, observation, polling, focus groups.

**Keep in mind** The advocacy process is unique and can make data collection challenging. It features outcomes that are unique (e.g., public will or political will). Therefore, other less conventional methods are particularly applicable to advocacy. Also, several new methods have been developed specifically for advocacy evaluation.

Seventeen tools specific for monitoring and evaluation of advocacy efforts are presented in the table below, organized according to when they are typically used. Some tools can be utilized during more than one phase. Most of these tools are applicable for *both* monitoring and evaluation. They can be used internally by UNICEF M&E and program staff without extensive prior training.

**Tools organized by when they are typically used**

The full M&E Companion to the Advocacy Toolkit contains detailed explanation of the tools.

| Pre-intervention assessments and mapping | Ongoing monitoring of advocacy activities | Interim effects for advocacy audiences | Policy or system change results |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Advocacy capacity assessment<br>• Network mapping (before advocacy)<br>• System mapping (before advocacy) | • Media tracking<br>• Media scorecards<br>• Critical incident timelines<br>• Intense period debriefs<br>• 360-degree critical incident debriefs | • Research panels<br>• 'Crowdsourcing'<br>• Snapshot surveys<br>• Intercept Interviews<br>• Bellwether methodology<br>• Policymaker ratings<br>• Champion tracking<br>• ECCO analysis<br>• Network mapping (during or after advocacy) | • Policy tracking<br>• System mapping (after advocacy) |

## 4.3 Following up with next steps

The previous sections covered several key steps in planning advocacy monitoring and evaluation, including who will use the evaluation and how, along with what aspects of the advocacy strategy will be assessed and how. These sections did not, however, cover all aspects of M&E planning. Before evaluation planning is complete, details need to be added on other factors, including: who will collect data; the technical aspects of how and when methods will be implemented and with whom; and how and when findings will be reported.

**Keep in mind** Reporting out and reflecting on what is learned from monitoring and evaluation is an essential part of the advocacy process. Reflection based on both data and experience is a critical discipline for advocacy practitioners.

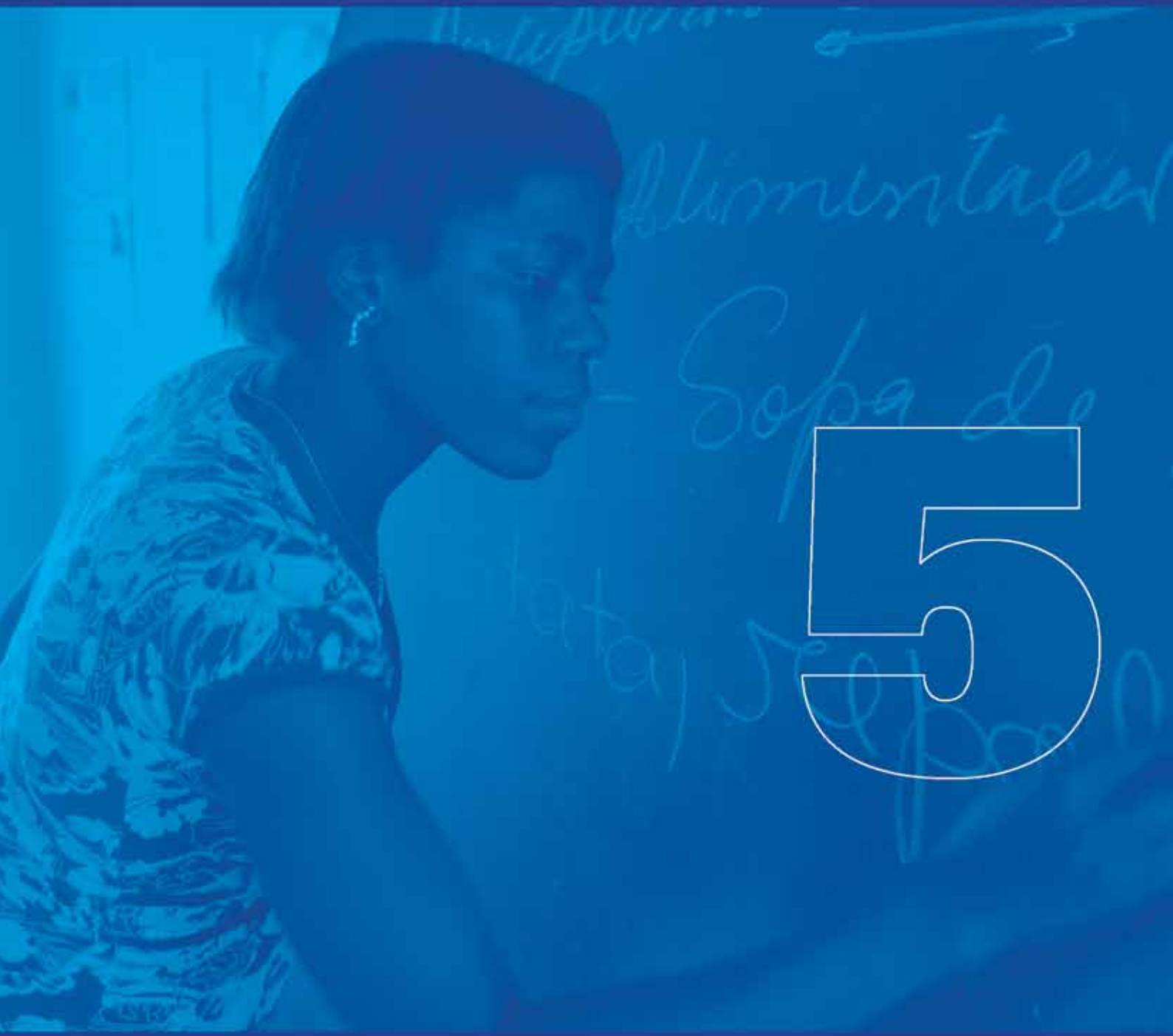
Once the complete plan is in place, implementation can begin. Because advocacy strategies often evolve in response to changing circumstances and conditions, advocacy M&E plans must shift in order to stay relevant and useful. The plan should be revisited regularly to make sure it is on target and still has value for its intended users.

Questions that should be reflected on regularly include:

- *What worked well?*
- *What did not work?*
- *What could be improved?*
- *What lessons are drawn for next time?*
- *What action turned out better than hoped for?*
- *What disappointed participants?*
- *What messages resonated?*

Regular strategy meetings during which monitoring and evaluation data are discussed are one way of fostering reflection. Another is through write-ups that chronicle good practices, lessons learned, innovations and stories from the field (Chapter 5 provides guidelines on this type of writing). Open-minded and adaptable organizations will also identify what could have worked better, and see critique as a learning method.

Finally, advocacy success should be recognized and celebrated. This includes success or progress on interim outcomes, which are important milestones even if policies and practices ultimately are not fully achieved.



5

# Managing Knowledge in Advocacy

**"To do good work, one must first have good tools."** *– Chinese proverb*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2007-1757/Christine Nesbitt

# 5 Managing Knowledge in Advocacy

**Securing an accessible knowledge base should be at the heart of UNICEF's advocacy efforts. This provides evidence for effective advocacy, improves visibility of the organization's advocacy work and enables internal dialogue to support the creation of external communication. Chapter 5 covers:**

- **Ways of sharing knowledge and why it's important**
- **The Policy Advocacy Community of Practice**
- **Templates for documenting innovations, lessons learned and good practices**

## 5.1 Ways of sharing knowledge and why it's important

According to the 2006 Concept note on Knowledge Management: *Knowledge management is about getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time. Knowledge management is a component of the organizational knowledge function, explicitly focusing on managing knowledge systems for better organizational performance and improved outcomes. Knowledge management is a management activity that seeks to enhance the organization, integration, sharing and delivery of knowledge.*

*Critical knowledge needs and issues must be identified to support advocacy.* The most effective advocacy strategies are knowledge-based and leverage lessons from past experiences. A knowledge management system on advocacy can facilitate this by gathering, storing, retrieving and disseminating such information. This system should be demand-driven and focus on the needs of its users. Users should determine what knowledge they need to do their jobs effectively and creatively.

*Knowledge is not exclusively conveyed through documents and reports.* Discussions on important topics among advocacy practitioners who have relevant knowledge and experience is a key part of knowledge management. Time must be set aside for this practice. These discussions can be in person, online, or through email, as well as a variety of other fora. UNICEF has a set up Communities of Practice on a variety of topics, including policy advocacy, to share knowledge (see below). In addition, communication and knowledge management should be mutually supportive. Communication skills are essential to be better able to package knowledge in a way that is useful to users.

*Better collaboration on knowledge generation and access among Country Offices, National Committees, Regional Offices and Headquarters is fundamental.* UNICEF should also seek external knowledge to stay informed on external trends in children's issues that can support effective advocacy. Collaboration with established knowledge management centres is also needed to facilitate sharing and accessibility of advocacy knowledge.

*Systematic knowledge generation and sharing will help advocacy practitioners recognize that this practice builds their power.* It can also help reduce duplication of effort, resulting in more efficient use of scarce resources. Emphasis on knowledge management for advocacy must be built into the annual work plan so that resources are secured. And roles and responsibilities for knowledge generation and management need to be clearly defined.

Below are two specific examples of knowledge management tools which can be used to support UNICEF's advocacy work:

## 5.2 Policy Advocacy Community of Practice

UNICEF has established a Community of Practice for those staff involved in advocacy. While the focus has been on 'policy advocacy', discussions include advocacy in a variety of areas. The Community provides an online space to exchange ideas and experiences around advocacy. The Community can be used to ask questions and share stories, best practices, documents and experiences. The Community is accessible to all UNICEF staff interested in advocacy including national committees.

To join the Community, go the Communities Page on the UNICEF intranet and select the Policy Advocacy Community and click on the 'join community' button. You can also join the Community by going to the following address: *http://intranet.unicef.org/Cop/DPPAdvocacy/Communitycontent.nsf*

## 5.3 Innovations, Lessons Learned and Good Practices

Identifying, validating and properly documenting innovations, lessons learned and good practices are a necessary part of organizational learning and the pursuit of programme excellence. These processes not only institutionalize organizational learning, but also help in the generation of new ideas, improved demonstration of human rights-based approaches and promotion of evidence-based advocacy.

Please see below guidelines to help develop and document those experiences and programmes that you want to share with others. We also encourage you to browse the examples on the InPractice site for further ideas and hints *(http://intranet.unicef.org/pd/Inpractice.nsf).*

For more information, also see the PPPM Manual:

- PPP Manual, Chapter 6, Section 19: Identifying, validating and documenting innovations, lessons, and good practices
- PPP Manual, Chapter 6 Section 18: Pilot Projects

## Template 19: Innovations in Advocacy

These are summaries of operational innovations that have or are being implemented under UNICEF's mandate. These innovations may be pilot projects or new approaches to a standard model that can demonstrate initial results. The main focus of the document will be a concise description of the innovation so that its benefits are clear to your reader

*Instructions for use:* Fill in the following fields with your information. Guidance is provided for the major sections.

| |
|---|
| **Category:** Innovation |
| **Year:** |
| **Focus area:** |
| **Country:** |
| **Title:** |
| **Contact information:** |
| **Abstract:** *Please provide a 1-2 short paragraph summary of the innovation, its application, relevance to UNICEF's mandate and any next steps.* |
| **Background:** *Briefly (1 paragraph) describe the initial situation or issue which prompted the innovation and its application. Why was the initiative or innovation undertaken?* |
| **Strategy:** *Describe in 1-2 paragraphs the strategy and its implementation. This should link to the issue outlined above and highlight the main points of the strategy implemented.* |
| **Progress and Results:** *In summary (2-3 paragraphs) describe the progress and any verified results achieved – whether positive or negative - in implementing or applying the innovation. Provide quantitative and or qualitative evidence for successes or challenges. Please also describe any failures or shortfalls.* |
| **Innovation:** *Please provide 1-2 short paragraphs to describe in summary the innovation(s). This should leave the reader with an overall picture of the innovation, why it is important and the value it adds.* |
| **Potential application:** *Please describe briefly the potential application of this innovation to programming beyond the original context. Are there potential applications nationally, regionally, in emergency situations, etc.?* |
| **Next steps:** *Describe (1-2 paragraphs) any planned next steps in implementation and highlight any challenges or changes in strategy as a result of the progress or results to date.* |

## Tool 20: Lesson Learned in Advocacy

These are more detailed reflections (rather than just a description) on a particular operation and extraction of lessons learned through its implementation. These lessons may be positive (successes) or negative (failures); both are valuable and encouraged. You should be able to state the lesson(s) learned in a few sentences and provide verifiable results that are evidence of the lesson(s). Lessons learned have undergone more of a review process than innovations and generally have been implemented over a longer time frame.

*Instructions for use:* Fill in the following fields with your information. Guidance is provided for the major sections.

| |
|---|
| **Category:** Lesson Learned |
| **Year:** |
| **Focus area:** |
| **Country:** |
| **Title:** |
| **Contact information:** |
| **Abstract:** *Please provide a 1-2 short paragraph summary of the lesson(s) learned, its application, relevance to UNICEF's mandate and any next steps.* |
| **Background:** *Briefly (1 paragraph) describe the initial situation or issue and the challenge that was the basis for the lesson learned.* |
| **Strategy and application:** *Describe in 1-2 paragraphs the strategy and its implementation. This should link to the issue outlined above and highlight the main points of the strategy implemented. The main points should relate to the lesson being highlighted. Please also describe briefly (1 paragraph) the potential application of this lesson beyond the original context. Are there potential applications nationally, regionally, in emergency situations, etc.?* |
| **Progress and Results:** *In summary (2-3 paragraphs) describe the progress and any verified results achieved – whether positive or negative - in implementation. Provide quantitative and or qualitative evidence for successes or challenges that are the basis of the lesson learned. Please also describe any failures or shortfalls.* |
| **Lesson Learned:** *Please provide 1-2 short paragraphs to describe in summary the lesson(s) learned. Please limit to 1-2 major lessons learned. This should leave the reader with an overall picture of the lesson(s), why it is important and the value it adds.* |
| **Next steps:** *Describe (1-2 paragraphs) any planned next steps in implementation and highlight any challenges or changes in strategy as a result of the lessons learned to date.* |

## Tool 21: Good Practice in Advocacy

These are well documented and assessed programming practices that provide evidence of success/impact and which are valuable for replication, scaling up and further study. Documentation of good practices require more time and effort because of the need for assessment or evaluation results. The more evidence the better, as these practices should add value in a particular sector or region. Good practices may be the first step to peer review and wider publication.

*Instructions for use:* Fill in the following fields with your information. Guidance is provided for the major sections.

| |
|---|
| **Category:** Good Practice |
| **Year:** |
| **Focus area:** |
| **Country:** |
| **Title:** |
| **Contact information:** |
| **Abstract:** *Please provide a 1-2 short paragraph summary of the good practice, its application, relevance to UNICEF's mandate and any next steps.* |
| **Background:** *Describe in 2 paragraphs the initial situation or issue that was the basis for implementation of this good practice.* |
| **Strategy:** *Describe in 3-4 paragraphs the strategy and its implementation. This should link to the issue outlined above and highlight the main points of the strategy implemented. Describe successes and challenges during implementation.* |
| **Progress and Results:** *In summary (3-4 paragraphs) describe the progress, and evidence from evaluations used to validate results and conclusions. Provide quantitative and or qualitative evidence for successes that are the basis of the good practice. What were the outcomes?* |
| **Good Practice:** *Please provide 3-4 short paragraphs to describe in summary good practice(s) in the field. This should leave the reader with an overall picture of the practices(s), why they are useful and evidence of value they add.* |
| **Potential application:** *Please describe briefly the potential application of this practice beyond the original context. Are there potential applications nationally, regionally, in emergency situations, etc.? What are the issues that need to be considered?* |
| **Next steps:** *Describe (2-3 paragraphs) any planned next steps in implementation or any challenges in strategy as a result of this good practice to date.* |

6

# Managing risks in advocacy

**"You may never know what results come of your action, but if you do nothing there will be no result."** *– Mahatma Gandhi*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2010-1249/Cliff Volpe

# 6 Managing Risks in Advocacy

**When an organization goes public with an advocacy issue, there is always a chance that its reputation, relationships, staff and communities/partners it is involved with will be affected. This is particularly true when advocacy requires a strong stand on an issue. Chapter 6 covers:**

- **Identifying risks**
- **Analysing risks**
- **Managing risks**
- **Two Case Studies – managing advocacy risks in Mozambique, and a case study from China**

## 6.1 Identifying risks

The research underpinning advocacy is often the starting point for identifying risks because it highlights the overall environment – including the risks – in which advocacy must take place, as well as the root and immediate causes of issues. Without an assessment of risks, advocacy can lead to limited results and ineffective partnerships, often caused by vague terms of reference, poor communication and lack of understanding of partners' needs (UNICEF Risk Reference Guide).

Risks may be particularly high when advocacy requires a strong stand on an issue. And certain advocacy tactics, such as public campaigning and action, may entail more risk than others. Public debates and live forums that highlight both sides of an issue can turn into heated events, for example.

Advocacy can also strain relationships, particularly when it involves publicly criticizing particular people or groups. Oftentimes a target for advocacy might also be a partner, and so it is important to determine how to influence them without straining the relationship.

Working in partnerships may bring in its own sets of risks. Partnering with a political entity, certain government bodies or certain corporations may damage an organization's neutrality. Being part of an alliance or a coalition may lead to loss of distinctive identity and quality control. Advocacy might also affect the lives of UNICEF's advocacy practitioners and the people involved, including children and women.

**Keep in mind** Careful consideration should be given to the long-term and short-term risks and gains. Short-term gains might involve long-term risks, and short term risks might yield long-term gains.

In humanitarian advocacy, some threats associated with poor planning include: reduced access; security threats to staff and programmes; security threats to local population; loss of UNICEF legitimacy and influence, including acceptance of UNICEF as an impartial actor; distortion of messages; misunderstanding or conflict among partners and internally within the organization; and misallocated resources.

Nevertheless, risk can be minimized though thorough analysis and planning, including careful selection of advocacy activities, messages and messengers. Risk management is many times a question of weighing opportunity costs. Sometimes speaking out strongly may be better than losing legitimacy by keeping quiet. At other times, taking a certain position on an issue may result in being asked to leave the country, or may even involve physical danger. Such decisions must be made responsibly, collaboratively, and with good leadership. Advocacy risks must be assessed and its impact on all stakeholders, especially the most powerless – children and women – must be assessed and addressed. (For more on advocacy risks, responses and controls, see the UNICEF Risk Reference Guide, including the Risk and Control Library)

## 6.2 Analyzing risks

A risk analysis exercise can help to determine how best to plan and implement effective advocacy by assessing the impact of advocacy on children, security, programmatic and reputation risks to staff, communities, and the organization.

**Keep in mind** Good leadership and collaboration are essential to make the careful judgement required to balance all the relevant factors.

A helpful summary of guidelines for risk assessment is offered by Louisa Gosling and David Cohen[1]:

- Identify possible risks arising from proposed action (or lack of action).
- Assess the potential benefit of the proposed action.
- Identify who could be harmed.
- Assess level of risk.
- Consider measures you can take to mitigate the risks.
- Assess the level of risk remaining after mitigating measures have been taken.
- Decide if the benefit outweighs the risk.

## 6.3 Managing risks

Identifying and managing risk must be a key concern of any advocacy strategy and should be reflected in the design of the advocacy action plan. Following are several guidelines that might help manage risks:

*Reliable evidence is the foundation for the advocacy initiative, and it must stand up to scrutiny.* Using unreliable evidence is very risky. Evidence needs to be collected and analysed by experts. It should highlight the causes and solutions to a problem, and robustness checks should ensure that the assumptions and conclusions drawn are valid and strong. Particularly when evidence is gathered

1 Gosling, Louisa, and David Cohen, *Participant's Manual: Advocacy matters – Helping children change their world,* International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, p. 61.

**CASE STUDY**

## Managing advocacy risks in Mozambique

UNICEF Mozambique's structured approach to advocacy helps mitigate the risks in advocacy in the following ways:

- The development of clear advocacy messages tailored to different audiences ensures clarity of proposed policy changes. It promotes understanding of child rights and development issues, improves communication and strengthens collaboration amongst various stakeholders;
- A structured listing of follow-up actions allows for office-wide and senior-level involvement, complementing advocacy efforts from annual work plans in individual sections. It emphasises the overall accountabilities of the team to advocacy results and also identifies strategic partners and allies for joint efforts in shaping and influencing policy decisions around commonly agreed goals;
- Used as a monitoring tool to assess progress and achievements to date, the Advocacy Strategy 2009-2010 is also a flexible document which can be appropriately adjusted in light of new circumstances and evidence;
- Finally, the Advocacy Strategy 2009-2010 is a key reference to assess management and technical level accountability for advocacy efforts and programme implementation at the highest level (as per indicators in the 2009 Annual Management Plan). It also assigns responsibilities to lead sections within the Country Programme for oversight and management of respective advocacy efforts. As such it helps mitigate risks related to both lack of clarity about individual roles and lack of management political will to "push" issues relevant to child development (UNICEF Risk Reference Guide).

UNICEF Mozambique TOOLKIT brief 9 – Advocacy strategy 2009-2010.

from a pilot project in another region or country, it is important to determine whether it is applicable in the context one is planning on using it. (For more information on collecting reliable and strong evidence, please see Question 1 of Chapter 3).

*When research highlights local social norms that go against child rights, using positive local norms, cultural traditions and practices will help advance advocacy work.* In all cultures and traditions, for example, parents are responsible for children, protect them and want them to develop fully. In some cultures, extended families may take as much responsibility for children as immediate families. These social norms and cultures can become an important forum for advocacy and can help mitigate some of the risks associated with sensitive advocacy issues such child sexual abuse, and physical and humiliating punishments of children.

*Policy and power analysis can help provide a clearer picture of the political culture of the country, which can help in understanding and minimizing some of the risks associated with advocacy.* In a democratic society, the risks of speaking forcefully will be different from those in a monarchy or in an authoritarian state. Raising issues with a failed state or with non-state entities will generate a different set of risks. Assessing how these power-relationships work, and which channels are safer than other channels, will significantly help minimize risks.

*Support from partners, as well as from colleagues and other areas of the organization, can significantly help minimize risks.* A collaborative process with partners and colleagues can help identify risks that might otherwise have been over-looked, and working with a larger group can be safer than advocating alone.

## Tool 22 Sample risk-management matrix[2]

| Risk to … | Nature of risk… | Contingency plan… |
|---|---|---|
| Personnel and partners | Personnel and partners may be targeted or subject to violence as a result of speaking out | Protection/security measures must be put in place |
| Programmes | Programmes may be constrained or even closed | Ensure programme staff and partners are aware of reasons for advocacy and consulted on decisions/messages as appropriate |
| Relationship with government | Relationship may be strained or broken off, causing potential ally to lose face | Use lobbying and negotiation first<br><br>Make sure advocacy targets know why you have taken action<br><br>Ensure power analysis is accurate |
| Relationship with others, such as NGOs, professional bodies | Alliances may be compromised if advocacy criticizes work of other organizations<br><br>Allies will be offended if joint research is published without consultation | Ensure allies know what you are doing and why, and involve them in developing advocacy messages<br><br>Ensure evidence and quality of research is sound, and that proper credit is given for joint research |
| Children involved in advocacy | Children may be ostracized, abused or penalized if they speak out on contentious issues | The best interests of the child must always be the first concern; do not involve children in advocacy when their well-being is at risk |
| Reputation | Professional reputation can suffer if research is not sound<br><br>Association with certain partners can damage relations with others<br><br>Legitimacy can be undermined if funds are received from certain sources | Ensure good-quality research<br><br>Check allies' and coalition members' reputation<br><br>Scrutinize sources of funds |

2 Gosling, Louisa, and David Cohen, *Participant's Manual: Advocacy matters – Helping children change their world,* International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, p. 62.

## CASE STUDY Advocacy in China

Staff at UNICEF China found that effective advocacy requires the following four key ingredients:

1) Responsiveness and credibility, 2) trust, 3) effective closed-door advocacy and 4) targeted outreach.

### 1) Responsiveness, initiative and credibility

Responsiveness, initiative and credibility are key. It means addressing policy issues promptly, pro-actively and with adequate technical expertise. In China, UNICEF has demonstrated its responsiveness, initiative and credibility, for instance, in the following examples:

- The Reconstructing Wellbeing policy note -- UNICEF delivered the policy note within 6 weeks since the government's request (following the 2008 earthquake in China) and contributed relevant analysis and policy recommendations to China's Reconstruction Strategy
- Social welfare for children -- UNICEF reacted quickly to the government's interest to integrate policies, programs and services for poor and vulnerable children (broadly defined) and outlined a comprehensive child welfare & poverty framework involving system-based approach to child protection, social protection, child poverty reduction and both universal and targeted community service delivery.
- Local governance -- UNICEF pro-actively addressed the central-local fiscal and accountability relationships, and jointly with the World Bank developed a study and series of policy recommendations (attached) for top government partners.

### 2) Trust

Trust between UNICEF and the government is alsovery important. Without trust, there could be limited scope for analysis and policy dialogue. Building trust requires maintaining confidentiality with respect to data and analysis developed under UNICEF program. Hence, UNICEF China -- although encouraging greater transparency and knowledge exchange regarding the situation of children, policies and their impact, etc. -- does not share any studies developed under UNICEF program with any parties unless permitted by the government. This is particularly important for studies which benefited from a unique access to confidential and "sensitive" data arranged by government partners.

### 3) Effective closed-door advocacy

Effective closed-door advocacy is possible only when there is responsiveness, initiative, credibility and trust (points 1 & 2 above). Examples of successful closed door advocacy in China mainly include the following two types:

- Policy dialogue & consultations and analytic presentations in closed-door policy seminars and government internal policy workshops -- UNICEF experts in China regularly and actively participate in internal policy debates and deliver presentations in seminars held by top government partners (such as the consultative policy seminar on social policies for China's 12th Five-Year Plan organized by the top planning ministry; policy consultation on financing for social protection organized by the ministry of finance; or child poverty seminars organized by the State Council Leading Group for Poverty Alleviation and Development).
- Government internal dissemination of UNICEF studies, analysis and policy recommendations -- the government has been using its internal cross-ministerial dissemination channels to share UNICEF studies, analysis and policy recommendations. The Local Governance Study and Reconstructing Wellbeing policy note, for instance, have been shared by government partners and disseminated across ministries. Similarly, the Ministry of Finance has disseminated studies developed under UNICEF program for further internal policy debate, reflecting on these studies in policy and budgeting decisions.

Based on input from Hana Brixi, Chief, Social Policy and Economic Analysis, UNICEF China

**CASE STUDY** **Advocacy in China cont.**

4) Targeted outreach

Finally, the analytic work developed by UNICEF experts and under UNICEF program can strengthen its advocacy impact if strategically shared with selected domestic academic journals, top policy magazines, media and in conferences and other fora. In this context, it is prudent to interact with trusted focal points in the government to manage potential sensitivities.

In China, successful targeted outreach includes policy research seminars and debate with selected domestic researchers who participate in government internal policy debates and influence decision making. Examples include the following:

- Policy research articles and policy notes published in top domestic academic journals (for instance, articles on health system reform implementation in China Health Economics & Health Economics Studies journals) and policy magazines (for instance, UNICEF article on lessons from reconstructing social services after disasters and article on local governance in China's top policy magazine Bijiao that is read by senior policy makers)
- UNICEF studies disseminated widely in the domestic academic and research community (after government clearance)
- Media interviews
- Dissemination of international good practice summaries, examples and lessons
- Co-sponsorship and presentations at high-level and other influential fora such as the Child Poverty Forum (cosponsored jointly with the influential China Development Research Foundation), child poverty seminars (cosponsored by the State Council Leading Group for Poverty Alleviation and Development)

7

# Building Relationships and Securing Partnerships

**“If you want to go fast, travel alone. If you want to go far, travel together.”**

*– African proverb (exact country unknown)*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2009-2060/Josh Estey

# 7 Building Relationships and Securing Partnerships

**Advocacy requires building relationships – personal, public and institutional – which help organize people and groups to achieve a goal. This Chapter covers:**

- **The benefits of partnerships for strengthening advocacy**
- **Tips for establishing partnerships**
- **Different ways to create addition**
- **Difficulties of networks, alliances and coalitions**
- **Tips for establishing a network, alliance or coalitions**
- **Key opportunities for work with national partners**
- **A Special Focus on One UN**
- **Three Case Studies – Communicating as one, Partnering with the private sector in Yemen, and Influencing G20 discussions.**

## 7.1 The benefits of partnerships for strengthening advocacy

Advocacy efforts must invest time in building relationships, because creating a constituency is the key to success. Relationships are a crucial way of adding strength to advocacy work, and can be developed with potential allies to strengthen a joint call-for-change.

In countries around the world, UNICEF works with a wide range of partners to achieve advocacy results. This includes other UN agencies and bodies such as the UN Country Team; civil society organizations (NGOs, community - and faith-based organizations, other international and regional organizations; women's and youth groups), private sector and corporate foundations, research institutes, universities, donors and the media. Links with such partners become even more crucial in difficult environments, such as during humanitarian crises.

As a partner in advocacy processes, UNICEF may have the role of an observer or a convener, depending on the context. As an observer, UNICEF monitors the impact of policy and advocacy on children, helps provide a platform so that the voices of children and youth can be heard, and constantly promotes the best interests of the child. In its convening role, UNICEF, coordinates advocacy campaigns, mobilises partners and stakeholders behind an issue, helps garner resource mobilization and in-country technical assistance, provides policy expertise and essential information, and raises and receives funds to implement projects.

UNICEF mobilises women, youth and other sections of society and provides platforms for the articulation of the issues identified by stakeholders. It takes the lead advocacy role, for example, in the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). And through the Voices of Youth website (www.unicef.org/voy), young people exchange opinions and channel them into policy processes.

**CASE STUDY** **Communicating as One**

In the United Republic of Tanzania, UNICEF is moving towards development of one communication plan for the country's children involving UNICEF, Plan International, Savethe Children, World Vision, local NGOs and two government ministries. The joint communication plan provides UNICEF with a very strong basis for pooling resources in advancing the children's agenda. The convening power of UNICEF is vital in such initiatives.

The participation of a wide range of actors generate broader support for specific issues and increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of advocacy campaigns. Particularly when partners are selected carefully, and bring new perspective, skills, strengths and resources to the table, they can significantly enhance the campaign. Among the benefits of partnerships in advocacy, following are some highlights:

- **Global reach and country presence**
  Partnerships help spread messages more widely, both globally and nationally. They help link and align local, national and global processes. Partnerships between UNICEF and other international organizations at the global level can facilitate regional and country level partnerships and work, and partnerships at the country level can facilitate collaboration at the global level.

- **Evidence for advocacy**
  Partnerships can significantly facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise around children's issues. The Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice, for example, has developed an official global estimate on the number of children in prisons and has created a training manual for practitioners. Universities and think tanks also contribute knowledge and research capacities to generate relevant evidence and support identification of child-friendly policies and effective problem-solving mechanisms. The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities, for example, involves a global network of experts as well as national researchers.[3]

- **Technical expertise**
  Partnerships bring technical expertise in areas which are crucial to the success of the advocacy initiative. UNICEF and the IFIs often work closely on macroeconomic policy issues, each bringing different strengths and technical expertise to the table. Similarly, UNICEF and the WFP often work closely on issues of nutrition security. Together with WHO, UNICEF was instrumental in developing the Global Immunization Vision and Strategy, which in turn provides the GAVI Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation with a framework to guide its vaccine introduction programmes.

- **Capacity building**
  Many civil society organizations benefit from UNICEF's involvement because it enhances their capacity to advocate for children's rights and to achieve results for children. By building the capacity of local and national civil society, UNICEF

3 The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities aims to support evidence-based decision-making by analysing the effects of policy interventions on the situation of children. Around 45 countries are currently participating in the study; for more information, see www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index_45357.html (accessed 13 July 2010).

contributes directly to the development of societies that recognize and promote the rights of children.

- **Access to decision-makers**
  Partnerships often facilitate enhanced access to decision-makers who UNICEF might not otherwise have access. Partnerships widen networks and contacts of policy-makers, and those who can influence them.

- **Resources for advocacy**
  Partners play an important role in attracting financial and other resources for children by influencing the decisions of donors, mobilizing additional resources from foundations and the corporate sector, and creating innovative financing mechanisms such as the International Finance Facility for Immunisation. The corporate sector is a crucial partner for UNICEF in mobilizing resources.

- **Catalyst for behaviour change**
  Partnerships often involve the sharing of ideas which facilitate behaviour change. UNICEF's work in leveraging the private sector's networks and channels (e.g. media, retail, marketing, technology, customers and others) have contributed to raising public awareness on issues such as hand washing, HIV & AIDS, elimination of maternal & neonatal tetanus, Schools for Africa etc.

**CASE STUDY** **Partnering with the private sector in Yemen**

In 2006, UNICEF Yemen launched the Business Partnership for Girls' Education, which was the beginning of a novel tripartite coalition between the Government, the private sector and UNICEF in accelerating girls' education and reducing the gender gap in Yemen.

The Business Partnership supports the 'Let me learn' campaign and was the first major private sector initiative of its kind in the country. It was spearheaded by three leading business groups: the Arwa Group (Shamlan Water), Spacetel and the Universal Group.

In a practical demonstration of their support, the private sector distributed posters, flyers, stickers and notebooks – and assisted with production of radio and TV spots designed to create awareness of the importance of girls' education. The World Food Programme also played a key role in distribution of educational material through its well-established distribution mechanism related to Food for Education.*

* United Nations Children's Fund, 'News Note: Private sector comes forward to support girls' education', UNICEF, New York, 30 August 2006, www.unicef.org/media/media_35579.html, accessed 14 July 2010.

## 7.2 Tips on establishing partnerships for advocacy

The UNICEF Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships (E/ICEF/2009-10)) points to five criteria that underlie UNICEF's work with partners – equality, transparency, results oriented, responsibility, complementary. The Strategic Framework further highlights the need for explicit agreements, regular review, monitoring and evaluation, conformity to existing rules and procedures that reinforce equality and transparency, and an exit process that can lead to discontinuation of a partnership if necessary. (For more information, see UNICEF Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships, as well as other UNICEF established guidance for engagement with the private sector & civil society.[4])

4 See CF-EXD-2001-20 UNICEF Guidelines and Manual for Working with the Business Community, CF-EXD-2009-11 Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) and Small Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) with civil society organizations (CSOs), and associated Guidelines for Country Offices

**SPECIAL FOCUS**

## The One UN initiative

As part of the UN reforms, the One UN initiative piloting in eight countries – Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam – has provided remarkable opportunities for advocacy. Members of the UN family are finding ways to capitalize on their strengths and comparative advantages. Together, they are experimenting with ways to increase the United Nations' impact – through more coherent programmes, reduced transaction costs for governments and lower overhead costs for the UN system.

Delivering as One has brought partner countries, donors and the UN country team together with fresh energy, momentum and a greater sense of common purpose. The One UN initiative provides a platform for advocating and communicating with one voice, and this provides a greater force for advocating on key policy issues.

The advocacy messages are clear and well targeted, reflecting a shift from agency to issue-based communication. The One UN initiative also provides a more comprehensive, multifaceted perspective on advocacy issues, and greater efficiency and effectiveness in such areas as diversity of expertise, one

Additional tips include:

- Partnerships should be tactical and strategic. Although a broad range of strategies are available, choices must be made as to which tactics and/or partners can exert the maximum pressure on decisionmakers. Decisionmakers rarely respond to only one direction of pressure and will therefore need to be the focus of a number of tactics.

- Partnerships need to focus on the common space among partners for messaging and agreement, in spite of likely differing mandates and operational procedures, in order to leverage power and affect change for children.

- Partners should be involved in all aspects of advocacy. Often, the best partners are ones which have been engaged right from the beginning, during the situation analysis, as they share the responsibility for identifying the problem and the development of solutions to address the problem.

- Partnerships will bring risk if they fail, it is therefore critical for UNICEF personnel to be 'risk-aware'. By being risk-aware, the challenge of how to anticipate and reduce risks can be surmounted – and UNICEF avoids being so risk averse that creatively responsible initiatives are not taken.

- Consideration of organizational style and culture can help working relationships and collaboration.

- Some partners will be active partners in advocacy work. Others need to be 'cultivated' before they become active partners and true resources. How these partnerships are approached must be planned strategically.

- UNICEF should also explore cultivating partnerships with non-traditional actors, such as trade unions. These relationships can often open new avenues and channels for advocacy.

## 7.3 Different ways to create addition

Putting relationships together requires creativity and leadership. General points on each of the three terms are covered in this section. The words 'alliance' and 'coalition', however, can mean different things in different parts of the world; look beneath the label to see their common purpose in strengthening an advocacy initiative.

**Networks**

Networks have the advantage of creating free spaces that enable ideas, proposals and experiments to emerge. With electronic communication, they can create communities of practice that lead to collaboration without the costs and time of travel.

Networks, even when structured, lack the formal decision-making that leads to accountability within organizations and between them. Their purpose is to introduce the power of ideas and practice that may lead to a more intentional effort at building advocacy strength; which in turn, may advance a variety of initiatives affecting children.

**Alliances**

Alliances are formed around a common issue. They are usually ad hoc and will vary from loosely to highly structured. The participants in an alliance may disagree on some issues or have different priorities. Alliances are rarely permanent, but a new alliance can be formed at various stages. After a policy is changed, for example, attention can focus on implementation, and next steps to further advance the effort may include forming an implementation alliance.

Alliances can demonstrate power in their aggregate, and 'unlikely' alliances can create greater power. Decision makers pay attention to such alliances. They suggest that different perspectives support a common objective.

Alliances are often short-term and pragmatic. But short-term alliances in no way diminish significance of the work being done. In fact, they represent a powerful tool when organised with strategy and direction.

**Coalitions**

Coalitions, like alliances, work on joint actions. As a rule, they are more formal and have a decision-making process. The structure may well include staff which provide the driving leadership of the coalition. Coalitions create benefits for their members, but they can also drain organizational energy and human and financial resources. So the benefits must outweigh the costs.

Advantages for coalition members include essential ingredients of advocacy: Members are likely to receive information they otherwise would not have. Through connections, they may gain access to decision makers they would normally have difficulty getting. Furthermore they can build relationships that can be activated for other issues.

When creating a network, alliance or coalition, consider which associations the decisionmaker is not likely to expect. Forming alliances with such groups may take the decisionmaker by surprise and help to move things forward.

## 7.4 Difficulties of networks, coalitions and alliances[5]

Networks, alliances and coalitions offer many advantages for groups that need to combine strength and resources to advance their cause. If not well organized, however, they can drain resources and undermine members' advocacy efforts. Anticipating difficulties is a key part of advocacy work. Careful analysis and deliberation should help participants decide what opportunities are lost or created by building such partnerships, what is the stress toll in undertaking the effort, and what is lost in organisational identity and autonomy.[6]

Before joining a network, alliance or coalition, organizations should consider the following areas:

- Communication barriers, including technological barriers such as lack of internet access or the lack of a common language. Without good, ongoing communication, some members will be uninformed and will be excluded from decisions.
- Credibility. Organizations do not want to be formally associated with groups that may harm their reputation.
- Undemocratic decision-making. Processes and relationships tend to work better when they are more democratic. In ever-changing environments, however, decisions sometimes need to be made quickly, without consultation. If basic agreement among members, open feedback processes and transparency on the reasons for an action are in place, the negative effects of unilateral decisions may be avoided.
- Loss of autonomy. Smaller organizations may be reluctant to join a coalition for fear they will be over-ruled by the collective.
- Competition between the coalition and its members. Coalitions can become counterproductive if their activities become too similar to those of the member groups.
- Funding issues. Funds are often a source of distrust, one of the most common reasons for a coalition's break-up. Sometimes those with greater fund-raising skills feel entitled to more control.
- Expectation of unity. In some cases, coalition members assume they share similar principles, perspectives and priorities beyond the issues that bring them together. When differences arise over messages, tactics or goals, they may view disagreement as political betrayal.

**Keep in mind** National Committees working as part of NGO coalitions are sometimes asked to put UNICEF's name on public statements which may not be aligned with, or as strong as UNICEF's position. This could lead to inconsistencies across countries and undermine UNICEF's global advocacy on the issue. Statements and actions by National Committees are for the most part seen as made on behalf of UNICEF as a whole. In deciding whether or not to issue or endorse a public statement, National Committees need to bear a few issues in mind: will this statement achieve the intended result? Is this the right time to do it? What are the potential risks for UNICEF global advocacy? It is important that National Committees also check with PFP on coordination and consistency of messaging.

5 Adapted from: Fund for Peace and Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, Human Rights Institution-Building: A handbook on establishing and sustaining human rights organizations, New York, 1994

6 Adapted from: Cohen, David, 'Essay on Advocacy', *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (forthcoming 2010).

## 7.5 Tips for establishing a network, alliance or coalition[7]

There are many ways to form a coalition or an alliance, and the following can be used to guide your particular strategy:

- Be clear about the advocacy issue proposed as the focus of the coalition. A written issue or problem statement can be helpful. Develop membership criteria and mechanisms for including new members and sustainability. Resolve what the coalition will and will not do. Invite potential members to determine as a group the alliance's purpose, scope and priorities. Decide how it will make decisions.

- If the group is large, select a steering committee of five to seven people who represent the different interests of member organizations. Use a steering committee to facilitate advocacy planning and strategy decisions. Ensure communication and consultation among members, resolve problems and conduct outreach. It is important to set up a process for ensuring that the steering committee is accountable and responsible to the broader group.

- Establish a task force to plan and coordinate activities, such as advocacy priorities, specific agendas, publicity, outreach, lobbying, fund-raising and procedures.

- Assess progress periodically and make whatever changes are necessary. This assessment should examine relevant areas such as decision-making structures, the coalition's effectiveness in meeting advocacy objectives and opportunities for constituents to take a leadership role.

- Develop a code of conduct to ensure mutual respect and responsibility. If this is followed, member organizations can more easily be held accountable without finger-pointing and resentment. Remember that each member will have different strengths. Ensure that rules or collaboration acknowledge diversity in capacity and resources.

- State clearly what you have in common and what you don't. A coalition's goals must be clear, so that organizations fully comprehend their commitment when they join. At the same time, coalition members must openly acknowledge differing interests. By recognizing these differences, coalition leaders can promote trust and respect among the members, without sacrificing common values and vision.

- Let the membership and the issue suggest the coalition's structure and style. Coalitions can be formal or informal, tightly organised or loose and decentralized. The type of coalition chosen will depend on the kind of issue as well as the styles of the people and organizations involved. Coalitions evolve naturally and should not be forced to fit into any one style.

7 Adapted from: Wolff, Tom, and Gillian Kaye, editors, 'From the Ground Up: A workbook on coalition building and community development', AHEC/Community Partners, Amherst, 1994; and Advocacy & Leadership Center, 'Tips for Making a Coalition Work', Institute for Sustainable Communities, n.d., http://tools.iscvt.org/_media/advocacy/wiki/building_a_coalition.doc?id=advocacy%3Aempower_the_coalition%3Asidebar&cache=cache, accessed 14 July 2010.

- Reach out for a membership that is diverse – but certain. Coalitions should reach out for broad membership, except to those who are uncertain or uncommitted to the coalition's goals or strategies. The most effective coalitions have a solid core of fully committed organizations, which can draw together shifting groups of allies for discrete projects or campaigns. Overreaching for members can result in paralysis and suspicion. There's nothing worse than a strategy planning session where coalition members are eyeing each other instead of openly sharing ideas and plans.

- Choose interim objectives very strategically. Interim objectives should be significant enough for people to want to be involved but manageable enough so that there is a reasonable expectation of results. They should have the potential to involve a broad coalition and be of sufficient interest to gain public and media attention. Interim objectives should be chosen so they build relationships and lead towards work on other, more encompassing objectives.

- Stay open to partnerships outside the formal coalition structure. A coalition must be able to work with a great diversity of advocacy groups, but all groups need not belong as formal members. Organizations whose goals are more radical, or whose tactics are more extreme, are often more comfortable and effective working outside the formal coalition structure and informally coordinating their activities.

- Maintain strong ties from the top to major organizations. The coalition's leaders must also have strong ties to the major organisations, and their leaders must be strong. This commitment must be communicated within the organization, so that its staff members clearly understand that coalition work is a high priority.

- Make fair, clear agreements and stick to them. Coalition tasks and responsibilities should be clearly defined and assignments equitably apportioned. If members are falling down on the job, they should be supported promptly. Meetings should allow opportunities for members to report on their progress.

## 7.6 Key opportunities for work with national partners[8]

UNICEF's partnerships in advocacy may involve a range of actors, with each having a specific role within the initiative. These partnerships take on several forms at various points in the development of an advocacy strategy – including preparation, implementation and evaluation.

There are many opportunities to work with national partners, civil society, the private sector, media and the government. These include the launch of UN or government programmes; development and production of national MDG reports, reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child or CEDAW committees; and cooperation on preparing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, national development plans or national budgets.

The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is an example of an effective and wide-ranging partnership between government, regional commissions,

8 Adapted from: United Nations Development Programme, *The Blue Book: A hands-on approach to advocating for the Millennium Development Goals*, UNDP, New York, 2004, p. 29.

Bretton Woods institutions, humanitarian organizations, civil society, and UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies. As the planning framework for UN system development operations at the country level, it consists of common objectives and strategies of cooperation, a programme resources framework, and proposals for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation.

Special occasions can serve as a focus for joint action, including local/national holidays or celebrations; global days such as United Nations Day (24 October), HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (1 December), Poverty Eradication Day (26 October) and International Women's Day (8 March); and VIP visits and events with politicians, artists, athletes, business leaders or social activists – and of course UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors.

Opportunities in the political sphere include elections, parliamentary debates and working to pass laws favourable to child rights. Discussion of local current events such as new business ventures, human interest stories and/or economic issues in print and electronic media can provide a platform for cooperation. And joint advocacy can centre on global current events such as summits, G8/G20 meetings, climate change conferences. Regional meetings can also be key opportunities, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

**CASE STUDY** **Working with partners to influence G20 discussions**

In 2009, UNICEF wanted to ensure that the G20 would give enough attention to the effects of the economic crisis on vulnerable children. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) brought the idea of a Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) to UNICEF HQ, as well as other agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank.

GIVAS is designed to fill information gaps between the point when a global crisis impacts vulnerable populations and when solid quantitative information and analysis reaches decision-makers. GIVAS will compile real-time data and analysis from a variety of reliable sources. By covering multiple dimensions of vulnerability, it is intended to help the international community and national governments respond to crises in a more effective and timely fashion.

UNICEF was heavily involved with conceptualization and spearheaded development of the system – advocating for its implementation, along with key partners, including UN Member States, the World Bank and UNDP. The idea was eventually embraced by the Secretary-General's office. Before the 2009 G20 meeting in London, UNICEF used all its channels and influence to prepare the ground for discussion on moving GIVAS forward, partnering with the relevant national committees, governments and other influentials.

From UNICEF Community of Practice discussions; and United Nations Development Programme, et al., 'Recovering from Economic and Financal Crisis: Food security and safety nets', Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, New York, January 2010, p. 5

8

# Working with Children and Young People in Advocacy

**"In my opinion, participation is a great and important point in our lives which helps us to live the best life, as today's adolescents are tomorrow's leaders. They should be prepared for this, they must be given the chance to participate, learn, express their opinions and take part in discussing the issues that affect them and their future."**

*– Female, 17 years old, Egypt*

Photo Credit: © UNICEF/NYHQ2009-2277/Kate Holt

# 8 Working with Children and Young People in Advocacy

**The human rights-based approach considers participation as a fundamental principle, and there are specific guidelines for involving children and young people as partners in advocacy. Chapter 8 covers[9]:**

- **Why, when and how children and youth should be engaged in advocacy**
- **Standards for effective and meaningful participation in advocacy**
- **Points to remember**
- **A Special Focus on children's participation in monitoring and evaluating advocacy.**
- **Case Studies from Kazakhstan, India and Viet Nam**

## 8.1 Why should children and young people be engaged in advocacy?

Involving children in advocacy, and their meaningful participation, is central to the human-rights based approach to advocacy. It is part of the process of empowering children, as rights-holders, to demand their rights, by creating an environment where they can both voice their concerns, ideas and recommendations, and be heard by decision-makers and duty-bearers. It increases dignity, fairness, equity and equality, allowing children the opportunity to express themselves and participate as citizens in society.

**Keep in mind** Does our advocacy work raise the voices of all children and young people who are affected by the issue, without discrimination and including the most hard to reach? The answer to this is central when designing any advocacy initiative with children and young people.

There are many internationally agreed standards for involving children and young people in programmes – including advocacy work – beginning with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), article 12:

1. *States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*

2. *For this purpose the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.*

9 Substantial input for this chapter comes from Ravi Karkara, Child and Adolescent Participation Specialist, Division of Policy and Practice, UNICEF New York

In 2009, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the international body established to monitor governments' implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted a General Comment on the Right of the Child to be Heard[10]. This General Comment elaborates in detail the scope of Article 12, and how the Committee expects governments to interpret their obligations to children under its provision. This commitment was given additional emphasis in the UN General Assembly Omnibus resolution in November 2009 which urged governments to:

> 'Assure that children are given the opportunity to be heard on all matters affecting them, without discrimination on any grounds, by adopting and/or continuing to implement regulations and arrangements that provide for and encourage, as appropriate, children's participation in all settings, including within the family, in school and in their communities, and that are firmly anchored in laws and institutional codes and that are regularly evaluated with regard to their effectiveness'[11]

Children and young people are often much better placed than external duty bearers to take the lead in assessing and analysing their situation – and in coming up with possible solutions. Planners often discount their participation under the pretext that the job at hand (for example drafting a policy) requires expertise and skills only obtained through higher-level education or specialist training. But young people are well placed to determine, for example, whether a health facility is responsive to their particular needs; young girls may know best why they or their peers drop out of school, and so on.

Some of the key benefits of children and young people's participation in advocacy are:[12]

- It will bring ideas from their reality to the discussion, allowing adults to see problems and the solutions from a child's perspective, and which adults might not have realised or thought of.
- Children and young people will have ownership of the solutions.
- Children and young people will be visible, and there will be greater acceptance of children as social actors and active citizens.
- Children and young people will learn new skills and gain self-confidence.
- When children and young people act, they often generate more commitment from adults.

Across the world, governments, as well as civil society organizations, professional bodies, academic institutions, development agencies as well as UN bodies, have taken action to try and give effect to children and youth participation. Books have been written, research has been undertaken, thousands of initiatives have been introduced, and spaces for children's voices have been created, from the school to the global community. Children have been engaged in advocacy, social and economic analysis, campaigning, research, peer education, community development, political dialogue, democratic participation in schools, programme and project design and development. The last 20 years have been a period of both advocacy to promote and legitimize the concept of participation, and the exploration of strategies for translating it into practice. Indeed, for many people, children's rights have become synonymous with participation.

10 General Comment No.12, The Rights of the Child to be Heard, CRC/C/GC/12, July 2009. http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC-C-GC-12.doc

11 UN General Assembly, Promotion and Protection if Children's Rights, A/C.3/64/L.21/Rev.1

12 Ravi Karkara. UNICEF, European Commission Toolkit on Children's Participation (forthcoming)

Inclusion is also a primary principle for UNICEF, which extends to advocacy. There are many examples within UNICEF's initiatives where children and young people have initiated and led their own advocacy efforts on issues that are important to them, with support of and in partnership with adults. At other times, UNICEF has advocated on issues on behalf of children and young people by amplifying their voices and speaking out on issues of concern voiced by children and young people.

CASE STUDY

## Examples of child and youth participation in advocacy

There have been a growing number of initiatives on child and youth participation in advocacy since the CRC came into force in 1990. Highlights include:

- The 2002 UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, an event that actively encouraged the participation of children in the principal decision-making body of the United Nations.
- The 2006 UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children. This involved effective and meaningful child and youth participation at national and regional consultations, which not only provided a platform for their voices, concerns and recommendations but also recognized children's own action against violence.** A key recommendation of the Study was to promote the participation of children in ending violence against children: "*103. I recommend that States actively engage with children and respect their views in all aspects of prevention, response and monitoring of violence against them, taking into account article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children's organizations and child-led initiatives to address violence guided by the best interests of the child should be supported and encouraged*"† Children and adolescents participated in national, regional and international consultations, together with policy-makers. To disseminate the findings of the study, child-friendly versions were created for a range of age groups.*
- The 2008 World Congress III Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). It is increasingly being recognized that consulting children and adolescents is a practical way to ensure that policies and practices affecting them are effective.
- General Comment 12 on the Right of the Child to be Heard and the General Assembly 3rd Committee Resolution on the Rights of the Child (the "Omnibus" resolution) with a special focus on Right of the Child to be heard were adopted in 2009. The build up to the General Comment involved mobilization, campaigning and consultation with children and young people, experts, civil society organization, UN agencies and academic forces.

*Extracted from: http://www.unviolencestudy.org/

** Introduction to Child Participation in the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/cypguide/files/Introduction_to_Child_Participation_in_the_UN_Study.doc

† United Nations Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children (A/61/299). http://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/reports/SG_violencestudy_en.pdf

## 8.2 When should children and young people be involved in advocacy?

The core human rights-based approach to advocacy recognises children and young people as social actors. It is never too soon to start involving children. Guidance on how they can be involved in all stages of advocacy – planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – follows:

### TOOL 23: Involving children in all stages of advocacy[13]

| | Children are informed: | Children are consulted: | Children provide inputs: | Children are equal partners: | Children play a leading role: |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Planning** | They are informed about advocacy plans | Their views are incorporated into advocacy plans | They help to collect information | They have significant influence on decisions at planning stage, e.g., determining when, where and how advocacy activities should take place | They determine advocacy issues and have substantial and shaping influence at planning stage |
| **Implementation** | They are informed about progress of implementation | Their views are incorporated, for example in their advocacy materials | They take part in implementation; for example, they produce materials, attend meetings, etc. | They have a partnership role in advocacy – including decision-making responsibility | They lead the advocacy activities, with support from adults |
| **Monitoring** | They are informed about how the advocacy is working | They are asked for their opinions on how the advocacy is working | They help to collect information on the progress of the advocacy | They have influence on how monitoring is done | They substantially shape the monitoring process, with support from adults |
| **Evaluation** | They are informed about the impact of advocacy | They are asked for their views on the effects and impact of the project on their lives and how it could be improved | They help to collect information about effectiveness of the advocacy | They are involved in analysis and conclusion about effectiveness | They substantially shape the hole evaluation process. |

## 8.3 How should children and young people be engaged in advocacy?

Children are involved in advocacy in a variety of ways. Following are brief descriptions of how children and young people are often engaged in advocacy:

***Consultative*** **Child Participation in Advocacy**

This mainly includes working with children and young people in creating messages and recommendations on issues that affect their wellbeing. Here adults usually identify initiatives and facilitate children to take active roles in agreeing on key priorities and recommendations using participatory methodologies.

***Collaborative*** **Child Participation in Advocacy**

Collaborative child participation in advocacy involves children and adults working together throughout the process, from identification of the issue to monitoring

13 Adapted from: Gosling, Louisa, and David Cohen, Facilitator's Manual: Advocacy matters – Helping children change their world, International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, pp. 40–45.

and evaluating results. Advocacy initiatives of this sort can be initiated by children or adults, and in most cases the children take control of the process and draw on the adult support from time to time basis.

***Child Led* Advocacy**

As the name would suggest, children are not only be part of the process in child led advocacy, but lead it and often initiate it. However, this does not mean that children are left by themselves. Child led advocacy involves creating the space, channels and providing the resources for children to learn about issues, take up issues that affect them, and advocate on those issues. Children and youth need to be helped to understand laws and policies, and provided with child-friendly information. Moreover, we don't want them taking risks – children and youth need to be protected throughout the process. Children and youth need to be coached and supported. In fact we can learn how to support children in advocacy from children themselves.

**CASE STUDY**

## Kazakhstan: Involving children in policy advocacy

UNICEF Kazakhstan has followed a multi-pronged approach to creating democratic spaces for children and young people to participate in national-level policy debates that affect them.

The process was initiated by training 26 young facilitators in participatory techniques and skills, and helping them gain extensive understanding of core child rights principles and their application. The young facilitators conducted 70 sub-national consultations across the country and supported more than 2,000 children and young people in identifying their issues – and they can contribute to community and national development.

The consultations included views from boys, girls, and young women and men living in villages, children with disabilities, and those living in orphanages. The children were sensitized about the role of the media in the success of a democracy. Young video journalists received training, then documented the entire process and produced documentaries reflecting issues of importance to adolescents in the country. These videos were used as tools for advocacy.

The consultations resulted in a document representing the views and recommendations of the young people. To consolidate the gains from the process, UNICEF brought together a group of more than 2,500 children and young people delegates from various parts of the country. Known as the first-ever Adolescents and Youth Forum, and held in Astana, Kazakhstan, the event provided the children and young people with a platform to present their perspectives on Kazakhstan's emerging youth policy. This process has generated further actions on involvement of adolescents in policies and actions that affect their lives.

UNICEF, European Commission Toolkit on Children's Participation (forthcoming)

## CASE STUDY Child led advocacy from India

Following the emergence of Global Movement for Children (GMFC) as part of the UN Special Session on Children in 2001, Save the Children UK (South Zone) organized and collaborated with UNICEF and other international NGOs like Plan India, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision and Indo-German Social Service Society to start consultations with children in the Koraput district of Orissa.

These consultations identified physical and psychological punishments as the most prevalent form of violence against children, impeding their development and overall well-being. Children also prioritised this issue during the NPA in 2002. This was followed by a CSP (Country Strategy Plan) review by children. Thereafter the issue of physical and psychological punishment was incorporated in the programme plans.

At the micro level, the issue was taken up in an integrated manner. First, support was provided to partner NGOs to address the issue. This presented an initial challenge since partner organizations lacked clarity on it. Thereafter discussions with children were held on the impact of physical and psychological punishment. Replicable models were created such as 'Education – A joyful and continuous journey'. Topics like teacher student ratios, access to schools and bilingual teaching were also addressed. Children were even involved in developing indicators. Sensitisation was undertaken of different stakeholders, including parents, teachers, media and officials. Several different media were employed to raise awareness such as wall writings, theatre, letters, meetings and workshops. Children were involved in making a film on physical and psychological punishment, which was shown to the community members.

At the macro level, children were involved in planning the strategy to address the issue. An analysis of existing policies and systems (the education rules in Orissa) was made to identify areas for advocacy. Collaborations took place with other agencies and networks in the state. The organization also created a platform for children to interact with duty bearers. Support was mobilised from teachers, village education committees and MLAs (Member of Legislative Assembly). This was a mammoth task as MLAs initially tried to evade the subject, though later they raised the issue in the State Legislative Assembly. A state level interface with MLAs was organized in 2004 after which the media played a key role in generating public opinion. Finally in August 2004, the Chief Minister of Orissa issued a Government Order banning corporal punishments in schools in the state. Now stakeholders are working to ensure the ban is properly implemented.

For more information refer to: Bhandari, N. *Working against Physical and Degrading/Humiliating Punishments of Girls and Boys, Experiences from Andhra Pradesh and Orissa.* Save the Children (2005)

## CASE STUDY Children's participation in provincial National Development Plan consultations in Viet Nam

In Viet Nam, involving children as active players in grassroots consultations provided an important learning opportunity for children, government officials and civil society partners involved in developing the Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP). It opened up new spaces for child focused policy advocacy; and has had some impact on the content of the SEDP strategy document at both national and provincial levels.

For many of the children and young people involved, it was the first time that they had been consulted about policy matters. It was thus an important opportunity to articulate their views to policy decision-makers about their current quality of life and future aspirations. In many of the focus groups, children contributed actively to the discussion and appeared to enjoy the non hierarchical forum of interaction. In some cases children were

**CASE STUDY** **Children's participation** ***cont.***

less forthcoming, suggesting the need for developing children's capacities to participate with greater ease and confidence in group discussions, as well as enhancing the skills of adult facilitators to provide an environment conducive to open engagement and discussion.

Children's inclusion as one of the key community groups involved in the consultations had an equally important effect on INGOs, donors and government partners. Feedback from governmental officials at the commune and district levels indicated appreciation for the breadth of the exercise and the opportunity to hear opinions from a diverse range of citizens, including children and young people. Initial resistance notwithstanding, over the course of the consultation period, adult participants, particularly those at the provincial level where working with children was a novel experience, came to appreciate the importance of children's citizenship and also gained important skills in terms of working with children in a collaborative (rather than hierarchical) manner.

Nonetheless, in terms of the impact of the findings of the consultations with children and young people on the final version of the SEDP, the actual impact has been relatively limited. On the one hand, there is clear recognition of the importance of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and of using a participatory approach in provincial SEDP implementation plans, which constitutes an important advance. Nevertheless, disappointingly, there is no specific section on children or children's rights, and nor is childhood poverty mentioned as a particular concern requiring specific measures that go beyond policy interventions to address aggregate household poverty. In addition, it should be noted that in order to develop a comprehensive document that addressed the potential impacts of broader macroeconomic policies, the joint child rights organisations' submission to the SEDP committee had to go beyond the content of the grassroots consultations. More specifically, this submission sought to contextualise children's experiences in a broader policy framework, highlighting the need for social protection measures to counter the potentially negative spill over impacts of trade liberalisation following Viet Nam's 2006 accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and to initiate child focused budget monitoring to assess resource allocations for child related policies and programmes.

These limitations aside, the insights shared by children and young people have been invaluable in raising awareness among local and national leaders as well as donors and child rights advocates about the diversity and context specific nature of issues faced by children. The consultation process has also been helpful in identifying what future steps are necessary to ensure that children's rights are effectively embedded in poverty policy decision making processes. Although some officials from the Youth Union and the Committee on Population, Family and Children were already familiar with child friendly ways of working, it will be important to provide further capacity-building opportunities for commune, district and provincial leaders if they are to learn from, and effectively listen to, children and young people's perspectives. In particular, whereas the methods used during the consultation process focused predominantly on consensus building, it will be important to tease out differences among children in greater depth in future initiatives. One possible method could involve children's participation in policy and evaluation processes, as this would provide an opportunity for learning by doing for adults and children alike. It would also provide a compelling and meaningful way to feed back to children the 'results' of their participation in the grassroots consultations.

Adapted from Nguyen. T.T., Hanh, N.M., Jones, N. and P.T. Lan (2005) "Fostering the right to participation: Children's involvement in Vietnam's poverty reduction policy process" Young Lives Paper presented to the XVI ISA World Congress of Sociology. Text extracted from UNICEF-ODI 2010 'Child Rights in poverty Reduction Strategy Processes – A Desk Review'

## 8.4 Effective and meaningful child and youth participation

Child and youth involvement in advocacy needs to be based on their ethical and meaningful participation. This means that girls' and boys' participation should be relevant, and based on children's potential as well as their social and cultural context. Children and youth participation should be transparent and informative, voluntary, respectful of their views and background, child-friendly, inclusive and not discriminatory, supported by training, safe and sensitive to risks that may arise, and accountable (for more information on these areas, see UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment 12 below). Only when children's and youth's concerns and priorities drive the process will the outcome of advocacy truly benefit them in the long term. It is also important to believe in children and young people's capacity and potential, and at the same time, provide them with the opportunity to build their capacity to advocate on their own behalf.

Ultimately, the impact of children and young people's actions will not only be measured by the laws and policies that take into account and act upon children's recommendations – it will also be gauged by a greater acceptance of children and young people leading advocacy efforts. The challenge is to make children and young people's participation in advocacy familiar and not unusual. Repetition of the message of the benefits of children and young people's participation and concrete examples of good practice are important for bringing this about.

### UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment 12: The right of the child to be heard[14]

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child urges States parties to avoid tokenistic approaches, which limit children's expression of views or allow children to be heard, but fail to give their views due weight. It emphasizes that adult manipulation of children, placing children in situations where they are told what they can say, or exposing children to risk of harm through participation are not ethical practices and cannot be understood as implementing article 12.

If participation is to be effective and meaningful, it needs to be understood as a process, not as an individual one-off event. Experience since the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1989 has led to a broad consensus on the basic requirements which have to be reached for effective, ethical and meaningful implementation of article 12. The Committee recommends that States parties integrate these requirements into all legislative and other measures for the implementation of article 12.

All processes, in which a child or children are heard and participate, must be:

- **Transparent and informative**. Children must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views freely and their views to be given due weight, and how this participation will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact;
- **Voluntary.** Children should never be coerced into expressing views against their wishes and they should be informed that they can cease involvement at any stage;

14 General Comment No.12, The Rights of the Child to be Heard, CRC/C/GC/12, July 2009. Paragraphs 132-134. http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC-C-GC-12.doc

- **Respectful.** Children's views have to be treated with respect and they should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities. Adults working with children should acknowledge, respect and build on good examples of children's participation, for instance, in their contributions to the family, school, culture and the work environment. They also need an understanding of the socio-economic, environmental and cultural context of children's lives. Persons and organisations working for and with children should also respect children's views with regard to participation in public events;
- **Relevant.** The issues on which children have the right to express their views must be of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities. In addition, space needs to be created to enable children to highlight and address the issues they themselves identify as relevant and important;
- **Child-friendly.** Evironments and working methods should be adapted to children's capacities. Adequate time and resources should be made available to ensure that children are adequately prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views. Consideration needs to be given to the fact that children will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities;
- **Inclusive.** Participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination, and encourage opportunities for marginalized children, including both girls and boys, to be involved (see also para. 88 above). Children are not a homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds. Programmes also need to ensure that they are culturally sensitive to children from all communities;
- **Supported by training**. Adults need preparation, skills and support to facilitate children's participation effectively, to provide them, for example, with skills in listening, working jointly with children and engaging children effectively in accordance with their evolving capacities. Children themselves can be involved as trainers and facilitators on how to promote effective participation; they require capacity-building to strengthen their skills in, for example, effective participation awareness of their rights, and training in organising meetings, raising funds, dealing with the media, public speaking and advocacy;
- **Safe and sensitive to risk.** In certain situations, expression of views may involve risks. Adults have a responsibility towards the children with whom they work and must take every precaution to minimize the risk to children of violence, exploitation or any other negative consequence of their participation. Action necessary to provide appropriate protection will include the development of a clear child-protection strategy which recognizes the particular risks faced by some groups of children, and the extra barriers they face in obtaining help. Children must be aware of their right to be protected from harm and know where to go for help if needed. Investment in working with families and communities is important in order to build understanding of the value and implications of participation, and to minimize the risks to which children may otherwise be exposed;
- **Accountable.** Commitment to follow-up and evaluation is essential. For example, in any research or consultative process, children must be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and, where necessary, provided with the opportunity to challenge and influence the analysis of the findings. Children are also entitled to be provided with clear feedback on how

their participation has influenced any outcomes. Wherever appropriate, children should be given the opportunity to participate in follow-up processes or activities. Monitoring and evaluation of children's participation needs to be undertaken, where possible, with children themselves.

## 8.5 Points to remember

There are a few additional points that need to be kept in mind when involving children and young people in advocacy.

- **Involve adults.** While working with children and young people to strengthen their participation, it is equally important to work with adults to change attitudes and behaviour and achieve, over time, greater acceptance and understanding of children and young people's involvement. Adults have an important role to play in advocating for and creating child friendly spaces in which children can operate, be heard and have their views taken into account. It is important to first develop and strengthen children and young people's involvement in local level decision-making processes so that children's voices and actions can then more genuinely influence other processes at levels more distant from their immediate environments – for example, national, regional or international forums and processes. It is also important to work with adults, staff within the programme, build their capacities so that they understand how to elicit children and young people's participation within advocacy.
- **Involve all children and young people.** Does our advocacy work raise the voices of all groups of children and young people from all backgrounds, especially those most excluded? Investing in processes and structures that enable the voices of the marginalised children and young people to be raised is important.
- **Involve children and young people at all stages.** Involve children and young people in all stages of advocacy work, from planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow up. See Tool 19 above for guidance on this area.
- **Advocacy requires resources.** Involving children and young people in advocacy requires resources, which goes beyond finances. It requires manpower, time and knowledge and above all, the willingness to achieve the positive changes together with children.
- **Share knowledge with children and young people.** For children and young people to advocate, we need to find ways for them to become knowledgeable about the issues. They need to be able to understand laws, policies and the larger context of the issue. This highlights the importance of generating information that is child-friendly, appropriate to their age, ability and language. With the right knowledge, children and young people can serve as prime actors on their own behalf. They provide authentic voices. Knowledge will make their voices powerful.
- **Make the most of what we already have.** Build on and strengthen resources already in place, such as children's clubs, committees and parliaments, and other structures. These can be the backbones of process and implementation when involving children and young people in advocacy.
- **Advocacy has risks.** And in some circumstances it threatens children's and young people's well-being. Child-led advocacy does not mean that children are left by themselves and are given all the responsibility to bring about a change. We need to learn from children and young people about how we can support them. We must help them become aware of potential risks. Sometimes the

risks may be too high for children and young people to participate safely. In these cases, alternative ways will need to be found for bringing their voices and opinions into the debate. This may mean that adults advocate on behalf of children and young people, while keeping children's voices at the centre of the debate.

- **There is great vaue in involving children and young people.** It can be mutually beneficial for children and young people, the adult advocates, and the cause they undertake. Children and young people become more visible when they act for themselves and become more recognized and accepted as social actors, allies and citizens. Involving children and young people also brings in fresh and innovative ideas.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Children's participation in advocacy monitoring and evaluation

At multiple points, the Advocacy Toolkit emphasizes the importance of children's participation in advocacy. Examined through the M&E lens, this means: (1) identifying opportunities for children to have a role in collecting and interpreting data where appropriate; (2) making sure monitoring and evaluation tracks children's participation as something UNICEF values in the advocacy process.

Children should be encouraged to contribute to an understanding of advocacy progress and effectiveness. This provides them with a sense of ownership and interest in the outcomes, and helps motivate them to work towards improved outcomes. Efforts evaluated by adults alone will not necessarily take account of children's perspectives and experience.

Monitoring and evaluation of advocacy should:

- Elicit children's views on the advocacy effort while it is happening.
- Ask children to have a part in determining what should be evaluated.
- Involve children in data collection where possible.
- Review and discuss results with children in child-sensitive and accessible ways.

Monitoring and evaluation of child participation in advocacy should signal whether the involvement of children is a valued and important part of the advocacy process. Measures of child participation in advocacy include:

- Involvement of children who have the skills to move beyond token participation and become meaningful and effective advocacy participants – acting, for example, as advocacy messengers.
- Involvement of organizations dedicated to building children's skills to participate in advocacy.
- Involvement of advocacy practitioners with the skills to exert, promote and sponsor effective child participation.

SPECIAL FOCUS

## Voices of Youth: A platform for youth engagement and advocacy

Since 1995, Voices of Youth has focused on exploring the educational and community building potential of the Internet, and facilitating the active and substantive participation of young people on child rights and development related issues. Through web boards, interactive quizzes, youth leadership profiles, live chats and more, Voices of Youth provides thousands of young people from over 180 countries with an opportunity to self-inform, engage in lively debate, and partner with their peers and decision makers to create a world fit for children. For more information, please see: www.unicef.org/voy.

## 8.6 Additional tools and guidelines on child participation

In building a community of advocacy practitioners, we draw on useful material from others. Below is a list of publications furthering children's and young people's participation in advocacy:

**UNICEF**

*UNICEF HANDBOOK: Children as Advocates – Strengthening Children and Young People's Participation in Advocacy Fora.* June 2010

*Child and Youth Participation Resource Guide. E*xtensive online material, including document links, on a wide range of topics, New York, updated June 2010, *www.unicef.org/adolescence/cypguide/resourceguide_intro.html*

**Save the Children**

*www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/publications.html*

*Facilitator's Manual: Advocacy matters – Helping children change their world*, Louisa Gosling and David Cohen, International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, *www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/ParticipantsManual.pdf*

*Participant's Manual: Advocacy matters – Helping children change their world,* Louisa Gosling and David Cohen, International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2007, *www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/ParticipantsManual.pdf*

*One Step Beyond: Advocacy Handbook for Children and Young People*, Global Task Group on Violence against Children, Save the Children, Stockholm, 2008, *www.reddbarna.no/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=17791*

*So You Want to Consult with Children? A toolkit of good practice,* International Save the Children Alliance, London, 2003, *www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/childconsult_toolkit_final.pdf* (English, also available in French and Spanish)

*DIY Guide to Improving Your Community: Getting children and young people involved,* Sonja de Rijk, et al., Save the Children, Edinburgh, Scotland, 2005, *www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_3186.htm*

*Empowering Children and Young People: Promoting involvement in decision-making,* Phil Treseder, Save the Children UK, London, 2004, *www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_2321.htm*

**Plan**

*Global Warning: Children's right to be heard in global climate change negotiations*, Daniel Walden, Nick Hall and Kelly Hawrylyshyn, Plan UK, London, 2009, *www.childreninachangingclimate.org/docs/COP_global_warning.pdf*

**Ceará Centre for Protection of Children and Adolescents**

*Children and Young People In Action: Participating in budget work,* CEDECA-Ceará, Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for Southern Africa, Hatfield, 2005, *www.idasa.org.za/gbOutputFiles.asp?WriteContent=Y&RID=1575*

United Nations Children's Fund
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA

This Toolkit provides a set of practical tools and guidance to help UNICEF staff and partners in the development and management of their advocacy work. UNICEF has an exceptional history of advocating to protect and promote children's and women's rights; and the Advocacy Toolkit builds on this legacy, bringing together both internal and external advocacy expertise, good practices, knowledge and experience.

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