ARC resource pack

Study material

Foundation module 5

Advocacy

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This module is one of the following series of **ARC resource pack** modules.

Foundation modules
1 Understanding childhoods
2 Child rights-based approaches
3 Programme design
4 Participation and inclusion
5 Advocacy
6 Community mobilisation
7 Psychosocial support

Critical issue modules
1 Abuse and exploitation
2 Education
3 Children with disabilities
4 Sexual and reproductive health
5 Landmine awareness
6 Separated children
7 Children associated with armed forces or armed groups

All modules include:

- **study material** giving detailed information on the module's subject and a list of further reading
- **slides** giving key learning points and extracts from the study material, offering a useful resource when introducing training events and exercises
- **training material** for participatory workshops that comprises **exercises** giving practical guidance for facilitators and **handouts** for participants.

The following documents are also included in the ARC resource pack CD-ROM to ensure you can make the most of these modules.

- User guide
  An introduction to the ARC resource pack and the relationships between modules.
- Training manual
  Advice and ideas for training with ARC resource pack materials.
- Facilitator's toolkit
  General guidance on how to be an effective facilitator, with step-by-step introductions to a wide range of training methods.
- Definitions of terms
- Acronyms

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Introduction

This module provides practical information, guidelines, examples and tools to support organisations and key actors to undertake advocacy to bring about positive change for children in humanitarian contexts. Useful guidance is provided to analyse what type of advocacy bests suits a particular context as well as identifying advocacy targets and appropriate messages and developing advocacy strategies.

Doing advocacy in emergencies has specific challenges and risks, but also has the potential to draw attention to neglected emergencies and make a real change in the fulfilment of children's rights. Advocacy can lead to short-term changes but can also address underlying causes, making it an essential part of a rights-based approach. This study material is mainly drawn from two sources: *Advocacy matters: helping children change their world; an International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy* and the UNICEF document *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies*.

Section 1 **Roles and types of advocacy in emergencies** Provides an introduction to the role of advocacy in emergencies and about different approaches to advocacy as well as the importance of conducting advocacy on different levels simultaneously (local, national, regional and global).

Section 2 **Principles of rights-based approaches for advocacy in emergencies** Provides guidance on applying the principles of child rights-based approaches to advocacy. It shows the role of advocacy in rights-based programming and how to apply the principles of child rights-based programming to advocacy planning and implementation. It shows how advocacy should be clearly accountable to the population affected by the emergency, and should be based on solid evidence to provide legitimacy.

Section 3 **Defining the change being sought** Provides guidance on the practical steps involved in identifying an issue that can be addressed through advocacy, defining the strategic aims of advocacy and assessing its potential risks.

Section 4 **Who can make the change? Identifying advocacy targets and developing appropriate messages** Provides ways to think about what needs to be changed and how to exert influence on those with power to make the change. This section shows how to analyse policy processes and power relations, recognising that there are different kinds of power operating in a dynamic and complex environment.

Section 5 **The steps to achieving change. Developing an advocacy strategy** Covers the process of devising the advocacy strategy. First, by formulating exactly what the advocacy is aiming to achieve through setting change objectives, and then by deciding on the best tactics for getting the message across to targets, and identifying advocacy opportunities.

Section 6 **Tools for implementing advocacy** Outlines the available instruments that can be used in implementing advocacy strategies. It also discusses how to effectively use direct advocacy as well as mobilising the public and working with the media to achieve the changes being sought.

Section 7 **Planning, monitoring and evaluation** Provides tools for building an action plan bringing together what has been learned about the decision-making process, advocacy opportunities, and tactics and tools, and who will lead and who will

take part in different activities, and what resources will be required. Because of its unpredictable and opportunistic nature, advocacy needs to be monitored constantly to make sure it is working as well as possible, and to coordinate advocacy using different approaches at different levels.

Definitions of terms

- **Child-centred advocacy** Children are involved in the advocacy strategy in such a way that their interests are central and their voices are clearly heard. Advocacy activities should be based on needs as expressed by children, and not as perceived by adults.
- **Child-led advocacy** Children carry out the advocacy on issues that are of major interest to them, and organisations or other adults support them to carry out the advocacy.
- **Duty bearer** Body or individual who has responsibilities and obligations towards rights holders, as enshrined in international and national law and human rights instruments. The State, as the prime duty bearer, has an obligation to respect and protect people's rights and provide children's rights (see **rights holders**).
- **Influential(s)** An individual or organisation that is well positioned to influence the thinking and action of a target (see **target**) through a variety of means (for example financial pressure, status and reputation, power relationship).
- **Lobbying** Direct communication with decision makers and others who have influence over them. In advocacy, it refers to conversations and meetings where people get access to and seek to persuade those in power.

  Rights holder Individual or collection of individuals in possession of a right who can claim to see the right respected, protected and fulfilled. The rights holder may also have duties and obligations (thus also being a duty bearer) to other rights holders (see **duty bearer**).
- **Stakeholder** All groups of people who can affect or will be affected by the proposed activity, including children, individuals, institutions, enterprises or government bodies that may have a relationship with children. There are differences in the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, their access to and control over resources and the part they play in decision making.
- **Target(s)** The key individual(s) who are in a position to bring about the policy change sought (see **influentials**).

Section 1
Roles and types of advocacy in emergencies

Key learning points

- Advocacy can complement and strengthen humanitarian response, contributing to increasing protection for children and women and preventing further risks.
- A range of different advocacy tools and approaches, informal or public, can be used according to the context in order to manage the risks.
- Advocacy can be carried out on different levels from local to global to contribute to the same overall goal. It is essential to coordinate the advocacy on different levels.
- Advocacy in emergencies should always take into account humanitarian principles and ensure that advocacy does not have adverse consequences on the population affected by the emergency.

The role of advocacy to protect children's rights in emergencies

Advocacy will always be needed to provide a voice for children in emergencies, to ensure that responses are appropriate to children's needs and rights, and to ensure that they respect humanitarian principles.

Advocacy cannot replace other response strategies but can help to increase the breadth and resources of available mechanisms for strengthening response. Advocacy can also serve to complement and strengthen humanitarian response, helping to increase protection for children and prevent further risks.

Different agencies have slightly different definitions of advocacy, for example:

UNICEF

'Deliberate efforts based on demonstrated evidence, to persuade those in authority to adopt certain policies or actions in order to protect women and children's rights.' [1]

International Save the Children Alliance

'Advocacy is a set of organised activities designed to influence the policies and actions of others to achieve positive changes for children's lives based on the experience and knowledge of working directly with children, their families and communities.' [2]

The Office for coordination of humanitarian affairs (OCHA)

'OCHA is recognised by the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) as the leading agency for advocacy within the United Nations. It describes humanitarian advocacy as work that seeks to address the external and internal conditions that imperil civilians and render aid and protection necessary.' [3]

Examples of advocacy goals for children in emergencies

General goals

- Ensure humanitarian access to children in need.
- Make education and child protection an integral part of every humanitarian response by the international community.

- Ensure that children's voices and expressed needs inform the humanitarian response.
- Increase governments' delivery of their obligations under the UN Convention on the rights of the child (CRC) in emergencies, as well as UN Security Council resolutions and other instruments of international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law.

Specific goals

- Increase government programmatic and funding support for the protection of children in conflict and disasters. Donors must be prepared to commit long-term funding for emergency response to address post conflict priorities and reintegration.
- Engage in the humanitarian reform process so that it works better for children (including improving predictability, quality, accountability of UN organisations and non-governmental organisations, and ensuring the independence of humanitarian aid).

Among its multiple benefits, advocacy can not only potentially lead to interventions that have direct impact and coverage, but can also contribute to a broader approach that creates change in policies and actions for long lasting and positive change. Therefore, advocacy is an essential component of all emergency responses, although the purpose and approach may differ in different contexts.

Advocacy holding duty bearers to account in emergencies

Rights-based advocacy is the means by which duty bearers are held accountable. In emergencies advocacy is directed toward national government, bilateral donors and international institutions to keep children high on the international agenda so that promises made are kept and properly resourced.

The State remains the primary duty bearer during times of conflict, natural disaster, or protracted complex emergencies, but is often unable to meet all of its obligations. This may be due to shocks to its local structures (such as destroyed schools and health centres, and displaced personnel). Or it may be due to an unwillingness and/or lack of authority in the area (such as budgets that prioritise military spending, geographical areas of the country no longer under central control, and policies directly aimed at further marginalising particular groups of people). A capacity analysis helps identify whether gaps in a duty bearer's capacity are due to lack of resources, authority, or motivation.

Other duty bearers who might be held accountable through advocacy will depend on the context, but often include international bilateral donors, UN agencies and structures at field and international level, governments present on the UN Security Council, regional organisations or groupings, and foreign offices involved in political negotiations.

A situation analysis will show which duty bearers should be advocacy targets, those who are able to bring about change but must be persuaded to do so. For more information on situation analysis, see **Section 3**.

Different advocacy approaches: informal and public

The best advocacy approach will depend on the particular situation and the best way to influence the key advocacy target with the least risk to the people affected by the emergency. The advocacy approach, including the goals, directions and methods used, may also change during the course of time and according to changed circumstances.

To overcome programmatic and other risks associated with poorly planned and executed advocacy, a variety of diverse advocacy tools and types should be explored. Advocacy can be public or informal (also known as private advocacy), or a combination of both, depending on the local context, desired outcome and sensitivity of the subject. The best approach and tools to use will depend on the analysis of targets and influentials.

For a list of examples of advocacy tools, see **Section 6**.

Informal advocacy

Informal advocacy refers to actions that take place privately. These include a conversation, a private negotiation, or a meeting; ie. advocacy without publicity. This kind of advocacy is often used in the earliest stages of a crisis, when a brief conversation with a manager from another organisation can suffice to remind them of, for example, a school space in a camp, or lighting by latrines. Informal advocacy is also practiced where there is political sensitivity or public advocacy could jeopardise beneficiaries, staff or programming.

For example, the International Committee of the Red Cross' (ICRC) approach is to focus on bilateral engagement with parties to a conflict about adherence to the Geneva conventions and their additional protocols.

Informal advocacy often takes place on an ad hoc basis, when the opportunity arises. In order to be prepared with a message for such occasions, it is very useful to develop a one minute advocacy message. This can be used at any opportunity, for example a brief, unexpected encounter with a decision maker (see **Section 4** for more information).

Public advocacy

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

As with informal advocacy, the one minute advocacy message can also be useful in public forums, for example a short media interview.

Both informal and public advocacy can also be quiet, that is, not specifically attributed to a single individual or agency but rather collected under one, sometimes anonymous, voice. For example, following the appointment of a special envoy for Zimbabwe[4] in June 2005, UNICEF chose to temporarily suspend any press or media communications pending the report of the special envoy on the humanitarian impact of organised demolitions in the country. Speaking with one voice through an interagency report helped to ensure UNICEF's continued access to vulnerable populations in Zimbabwe.

It is important to remember that informal and public advocacy are not mutually exclusive, but can be used in parallel.

Different levels of advocacy: local, national, regional and global

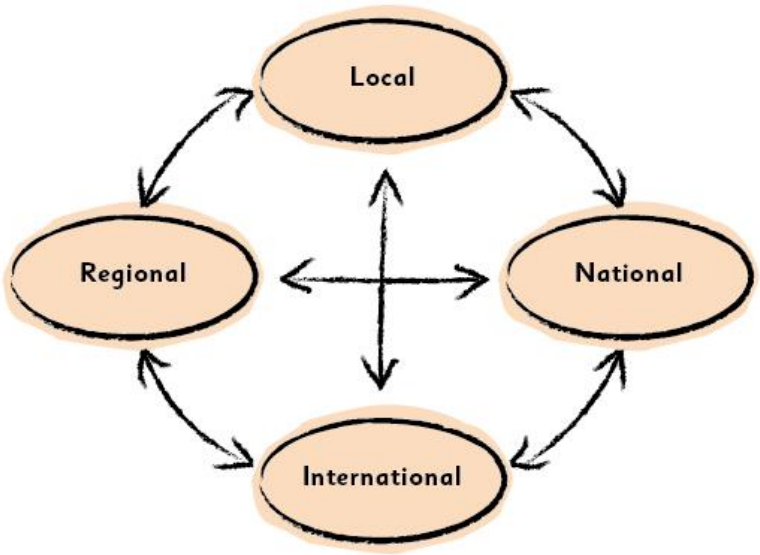
Advocacy can take place at four different levels in emergencies:

- local
- national
- regional
- international.

Advocacy at different levels reinforces the message. Advocacy outside a country programme can complement field-based advocacy efforts, as appropriate.

Different kinds of advocacy can be used at different levels simultaneously for greater effect as shown in the following diagram. Advocacy can be prioritised at the international or regional level to manage risks to staff and programmes. In all circumstances, there needs to be clear communication and information sharing between these different levels to develop an effective advocacy strategy.

Links and influences between advocacy activities at different levels[5]



Some examples of what advocacy can look like at different levels include the following.

At the local level

- Influencing local municipal authorities. One example is to ensure access, or provision of services.
- Influencing programme design and implementation. For example, installing lighting next to latrines in an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp to protect women and girls against sexual violence in Indonesia.
- Convincing the local government of the importance of creating child-friendly services in a transit camp. For example, the creation of child-friendly spaces in refugee camps in Chad on the border with West Darfur.
- Demobilising and reintegrating children used and recruited by armed forces or groups. For example, dialogue with parties to the conflict as well as parents, community leaders and teachers in Sri Lanka.

- Lobbying the local government to provide primary education for children. For example, building temporary schools in Pakistan after the earthquake.

At a national level

- Humanitarian access. For example, the negotiations for the organisation of national exams in the North of Cote D'Ivoire with government, communities and rebel forces.
- National policy reform against the criminalisation of children in Sudan.
- Convincing the national government to abolish school fees in Liberia.

At a regional level

- Child protection concerns to be integrated into a national peace agreement being deliberated with regional partners. For example, Darfur peace agreement discussions in Abuja.
- An integrated health and nutrition strategy with UN and NGO partners to prevent problems of chronic child malnutrition in West Africa.

At the international level

- Increased funding for a neglected crisis. For example, UNICEF Child Alert for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
- International outrage against war crimes in a particular conflict. For example, public advocacy by several organisations against violations of international humanitarian law in the conflict in the Middle East.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Why use advocacy in emergencies?
Handout 1	Case study
Handout 2	Frequently asked questions
Handout 3	Save the Children UK's approach

Section 2
Principles of rights-based approaches for advocacy in emergencies

Key learning points

- The foundation principles of child rights programming should be applied to advocacy to ensure child participation, non-discrimination, the rights to survival and development, and the best interests of the child.
- Rights-based advocacy should ensure accountability to the population affected by the emergency.
- Rights-based approaches to advocacy means being evidence based and partnership focused.
- Child rights-based advocacy in emergencies should be based on internationally recognised norms and standards including the CRC.

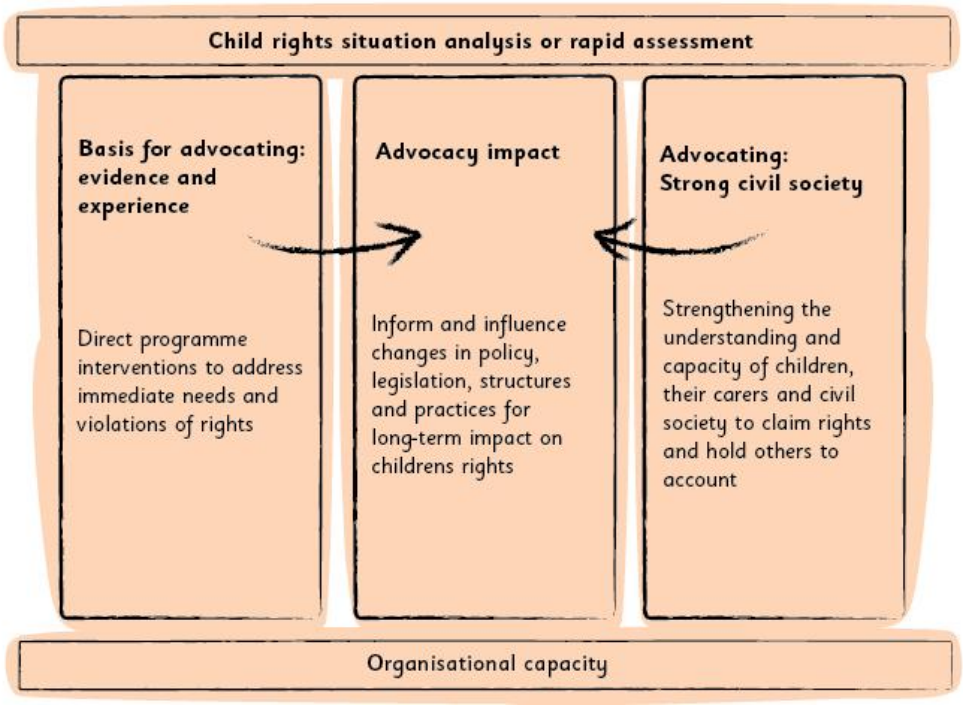
This section provides guidance on applying the principles of child rights-based approaches to advocacy. It shows the role of advocacy in rights-based programming and how to apply the principles of child rights-based programming to advocacy planning and implementation. It shows how advocacy should be clearly accountable to the population affected by the emergency, and should be based on solid evidence to provide legitimacy. A rights-based approach also requires work in partnership, where possible. Finally, the advocacy should be based on internationally recognised child rights and humanitarian norms and standards.

Applying the principles of child rights-based approaches to advocacy

Children's rights are often violated through a combination of complex processes, from the levels of family and community to those of national, regional and international. Duty bearers must be influenced and lobbied so that they meet their obligations under the CRC and other internationally recognised norms and standards.

Those doing advocacy play a key role in supporting children their families and communities to claim their rights by providing evidence from their own experience and a commitment to giving children a voice. Effective advocacy can bring about key changes in policy, legislation and practice that will have a lasting influence on children's lives.

The Three pillars model of child rights programming (CRP), below, shows how evidence and experience, drawn from direct activities (the first pillar), inform and influence changes in policy, legislation and structures (the central pillar). This process is most effectively undertaken by a strong and mobilised civil society that actively includes children and young people (the third pillar).



Advocacy strategies are most importantly determined by a careful analysis of the local context. A situation analysis will identify which rights are being violated, and which duty bearers might be held accountable through advocacy. The types of emergency (for example chronic, slow onset, rapid onset, natural disasters) and the different emergency phases will impact on advocacy design and implementation. For example, advocacy in a chronic emergency is likely to be more long term than advocacy following a sudden natural disaster. While the methods, approaches and forums might differ, however, the principles of a rights-based approach and partnership should remain constant. Using the situation analysis or rapid assessment as a foundation for the advocacy, will ensure the advocacy is context specific.

Advocacy which focuses on children's rights:

- recognises children as rights holders and social actors
- seeks to give priority to children and a child friendly environment
- is gender sensitive and seeking inclusive solutions which involve a focus on those boys and girls who are at risk and discriminated against
- addresses unequal power structures (class, sex, ethnicity, age)
- aims for sustainable results for children by focusing not only on the immediate but also the root causes of problems
- uses participatory and empowering approaches in particular enabling children to advocate for themselves
- maintains a holistic vision of the rights of the child while making strategic choices about specific advocacy objectives
- focuses on those who are most at risk and discriminated against

- recognises governments as primary duty bearers accountable to their citizens, including children, and the international community
- recognises parents and families as primary caregivers, protectors and guides, and support them in these roles.

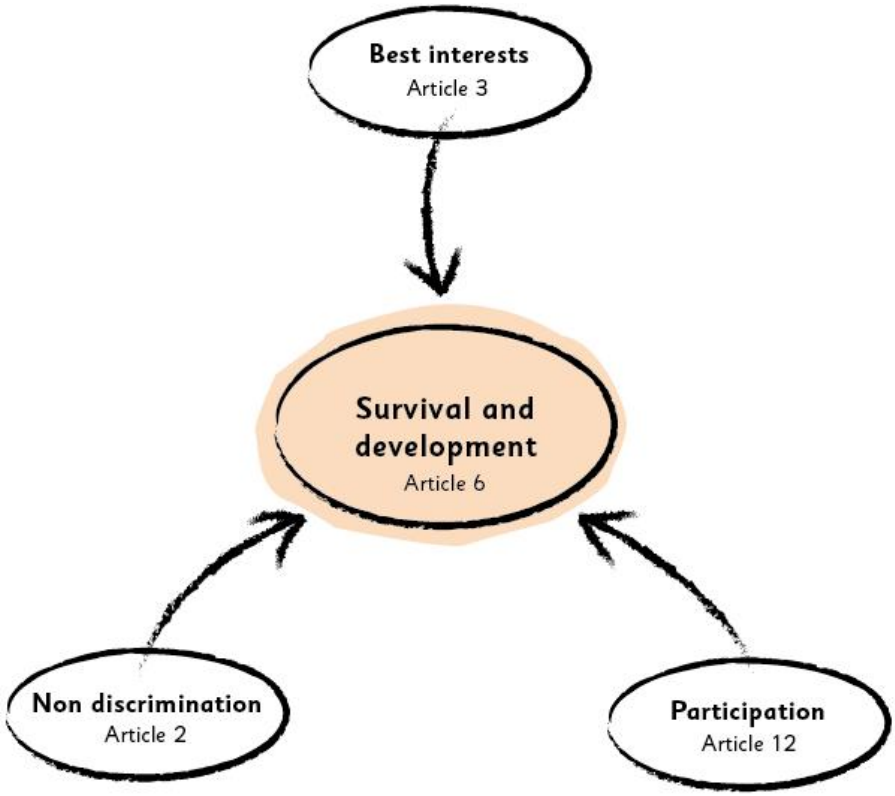
Applying the foundation principles of the CRC to advocacy

Any work that protects or promotes children's rights, including advocacy, is guided by the four foundation principles of the CRC:

- non-discrimination
- the best interests of the child
- the right to life, survival and development
- the right to participation.

This is illustrated in the following diagram.[6]

CRC principles



Applying the principle of participation to advocacy

Participatory advocacy explicitly engages the active participation of affected populations in the design and implementation of an advocacy strategy. This type of advocacy requires more time and capacity than representative advocacy, but the goal is to use participative techniques to illuminate and listen to the concerns of those most affected by the emergency in order to take appropriate action. Participatory advocacy

draws a range of civil society groups into the debate and determines ways to hold local decision makers accountable.

Participatory advocacy aims to increase local ownership of the advocacy strategy and provides an opportunity for consultation and consensus building.

Children and young people can also participate in advocacy in different ways, and organisations that work on issues affecting children need to move from talking for children to giving children opportunities to speak and empowering them to speak for themselves and their peers.

For more detail on involving children in advocacy see **Foundation module 4** Participation and inclusion.

Participatory advocacy

Nigeria: child participation in policy development

The committee established by the government to develop the National plan of action for orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV and AIDS accepted [the Save the Children] recommendation (after a good deal of lobbying) to include children in a series of regional workshops that had been organised to formulate the plan.

[They] successfully overcame the adults' initial opposition to make sure that children's participation was central to the plan. [They] demonstrated even to the most sceptical people that children's participation works, and the process of involving children is now accepted.

What was learned?

Children's participation demonstrates to adults that children, given the right environment, preparation and support, have very different views about vulnerability and are able to express their views well. Their input affected the development of the plan.

From *Advocacy matters: helping children change their world; an International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy*

Applying the principle of non-discrimination

Advocacy should be with or on behalf of all children, including those children and adults whose voices are not normally listened to in their community. This includes children defined as **aliens**, refugees, displaced persons, and even those children who are in the State illegally. It also includes children with disabilities, girls, children from minority groups, and children associated with armed groups or armed forces. Non-discrimination involves finding ways to ensure that the voices of these different groups and individuals are heard in advocacy messages.

Applying the principle of best interest

A universal principle governing decision making about advocacy activities is the principle of the best interests of the child. This principle is the overarching consideration for determining how to approach situations where other more specific

provisions of the CRC do not apply or are otherwise unclear. The assessment of the best interests of the child must be used in deciding whether, and how to do advocacy. It should also clearly inform all advocacy messages when holding duty bearers to account.

Applying the principle of right to life, survival and development

If children's survival and development rights are not met, it is impossible for them to meet their other rights. These rights are often threatened in an emergency situation, by, for example, a lack of access to food, shelter, clean water and schooling and by a lack of protection along children's roads to schools, playgrounds and medical service or provisions. The **survival and development** principle is not limited to physical aspects but also emphasises the need to ensure full and harmonious development of the child, including the spiritual, moral and social aspects, where education plays a key role. The principle of right to life, survival and development provides a strong foundation for advocacy messages in humanitarian situations.

As well as applying these four foundation principles, rights-based advocacy should ensure accountability, should be evidence based, and should work with partners.

Accountability

When working in humanitarian contexts, humanitarian agencies are accountable first and foremost to the communities with whom they are working. This means that members of the community should be involved at all stages of any intervention. It is essential that the analysis underlying the advocacy is sound and reflects the reality of people's lives. The implication here is that agencies must carry out advocacy in ways that are understood by and appropriate to these key stakeholders. In order to ensure a child rights focus, children's perceptions and voices must also be sought and included. Wherever possible they should be enabled to carry out advocacy for themselves.

The case of Darfur

One of the most critical and ongoing threats to the safety and security of men, women and children living in IDP camps were the ongoing attacks by armed men that were committed whenever they left the camps. This was particularly problematic for women and girls who would go out to collect firewood and grass for domestic use. The problem for agencies (and protection agencies in particular) was the lack of capacity by relevant actors and duty bearers to enhance protection. In discussions with various community groups, it was proposed that the African Union (AU) could perhaps increase their patrols to particularly problematic areas outside the camp in an effort to reduce these attacks. The communities at that stage were becoming increasingly wary of the AU, as accompanied patrols in other locations had met with limited success. The discussions were facilitated in a way that allowed the community to decide on the best way to potentially engage the AU. It was decided that information relating to the most dangerous areas would be provided (through regular focus group discussions with protection staff) who would subsequently brief the AU on where they should direct their patrols. At that time, the community did not want the information to be widely shared, demonstrating the skills in diplomacy and discretion required when conducting advocacy interventions.

Accountability can be ensured through **representative advocacy**, where the NGO staff will act to represent the affected populations, based on their pre-existing knowledge and observations. For example, soon after the 2004 tsunami, child rights organisations advocated (together with national authorities) for a delay in external adoptions of children so as to minimise the risk of child trafficking.

A representative approach to advocacy in emergencies assumes a demonstrated understanding of the most critical problems and priority interventions needed to address these.

Advocacy can also be **people centred** which focuses on skills transfer to build local capacity and ensure public accountability. The main actors are no longer NGO staff and partners, but the affected populations themselves. People-centred advocacy approaches prioritise the empowerment of people to advocate for changes in policies or actions themselves and places the interest of children at the heart of advocacy decision making. The important role of the NGO is predominantly one of support, facilitation, training and access to advocacy opportunities.

In conflict affected parts of Nepal, children have formed child clubs as a way to ensure that their rights are respected. Many of these children's clubs have been involved in direct advocacy for their rights and the rights of their peers. For example, children's clubs have staged street dramas for the community to raise awareness on such issues as early marriage and child labour. Child clubs have also been involved in direct advocacy with parents of children who are being kept out of school. Some child clubs have even documented the numbers of cases of early marriage, child labour, and other protection threats they have prevented in their communities.

The particular context, type and phase of the emergency will determine whether the most effective way to be accountable is through representative or people centred advocacy.

Evidence-based advocacy

Clear evidence is critical in advocacy, not the least out of an accountability aspect, it provides the solid ground from which to push an agenda forward. The collection of reliable data and credible evidence will strengthen the legitimacy of the advocacy strategy, minimise associated risks and have greater impact. Advocacy strategies should always be based, therefore, on some form of research or collection of data, rather than opinion or anecdotal information.

Credibility of data is important. For example, non-State actors in Sri Lanka attempted to challenge and discredit the information collected by child focused organisations on children being recruited into the armed forces. The organisations subsequently strengthened mechanisms for verification of the data in order to be able to refute further challenges.

Partnership-focused advocacy

Partnerships are critical to the success of advocacy activities of any type or form. It is generally recognised that the greater the number of organisations involved, the greater the advocacy **voice**, and hence the greater the likelihood of advocacy coordination, risk management, and success.

There is an increasing focus on complementarity between agencies in humanitarian responses, including for advocacy purposes. Partnerships should aim to increase strengths and ameliorate weaknesses by coming together in an advocacy strategy that makes the most of each partner's strengths. In Laos and Thailand, for example, UNHCR and UNICEF have worked together in developing a **quiet advocacy** approach to the protection of migrant children forcefully separated from their families.

In Afghanistan, Save the Children and 31 other Afghanistan-based NGOs jointly drafted and submitted a letter to the UN Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in requesting neutral humanitarian coordination mechanisms.

A common advocacy strategy shared by partners potentially has greater benefits. At the same time it is sometimes necessary for organisations to act alone in order to fulfil their roles. The sharing of plans with other organisations (even without a partnership framework) can serve to increase coordination in the humanitarian sector.

However, one risk associated with forming partnerships around advocacy messages is that the message can be watered down if too many organisations join in and have to agree. Furthermore, in emergencies it can be difficult to establish partnerships due to the time constraints imposed by the urgency of the situation.

National legislation and global instruments

Applying a child rights approach to advocacy in emergencies is rooted in a number of internationally accepted guiding frameworks. These include:

- international humanitarian law and the Geneva conventions and protocols
- refugee law
- international human rights instruments, including the UN Charter and the CRC including the reporting mechanisms under the CRC

- the monitoring and reporting mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children in armed conflict established through UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005)
- the UN Human Rights Council and the Universal periodic review mechanism
- the emerging concept of the responsibility to protect (R2P), as agreed by heads of state at the 2005 UN World Summit
- protection of civilians reporting to the UN Security Council
- humanitarian standards, including the code of conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements and NGOs in disaster relief (1994)
- Sphere Project humanitarian charter and minimum standards
- INEE Minimum standards for education in chronic crises and early reconstruction
- Paris principles and guidelines for children associated with armed forces or armed groups (2007)
- Humanitarian Accountability Project minimum standards
- EU Child rights guidelines (2007)
- EU Guidelines for children and armed conflict (2003)
- international targets, including the Millennium development goals
- UN Guidelines for the prevention of juvenile delinquency (Riyadh guidelines, 1990)
- UN Standard minimum rules for the administration of juvenile justice (Beijing rules, 1985)

See **Foundation module 2** Child rights-based approaches which includes a section on legal instruments.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	The added value of using a child rights focus
Handout 1	Case study
Handout 2	Stages of advocacy
Handout 3	An overview of rights-based approaches in advocacy
Handout 4	The Red Cross and Red Crescent code of conduct and child rights programming (CRP) principles

Section 3
Defining the change being sought

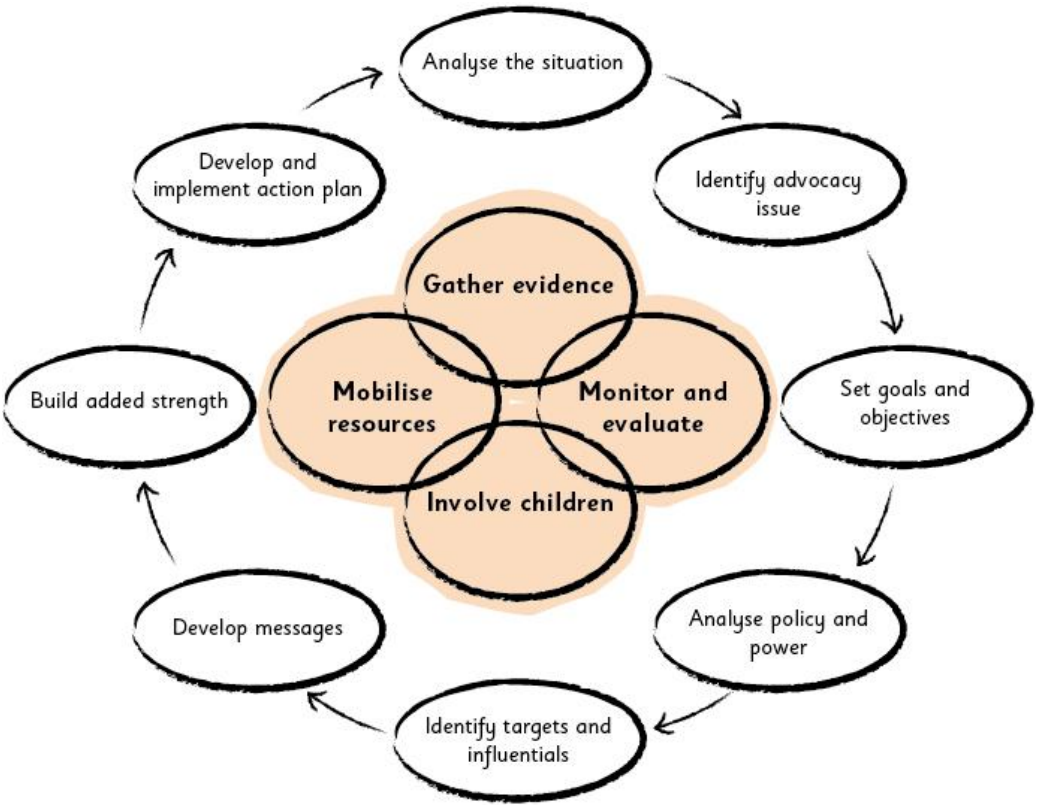
Key learning points

- Although it is often necessary to act quickly in emergencies, there are fundamental questions that should be addressed before embarking on advocacy.
- Situation analysis or rapid assessment is a critical component of an advocacy strategy and will reveal issues to be addressed through advocacy.
- A strategic **advocacy goal** is needed to guide the advocacy and decide where to focus efforts.
- Advocacy always involves risks. These should be carefully assessed at an early stage with decisions on how they can be mitigated and managed.

Developing an advocacy strategy within an emergency programme cycle

The use of the project and programme cycle to support the development of a strategy for advocacy in emergencies can take place in several hours, as a process over a period of weeks, or in an intense setting, such as a workshop. This process can help to ensure stronger ownership (both internally and among partners) and the involvement of a wide set of stakeholders. The following diagram shows one version of this cycle.

From *Advocacy matters: helping children change their world; an International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy*



In an emergency, a clear and orderly planning process is not always possible. It is sometimes essential to take very quick advocacy action in order to save lives and hold duty bearers to account. The following nine questions need to be addressed in any situation to ensure effective advocacy.

The top nine questions to ask when creating an advocacy strategy[7]

An advocacy strategy can be developed with the project and programme planning cycle.

- What do we want? (goals) And what needs to be done to make it happen? (objectives)
- Who has the power to make the change? (audiences or targets)
- What do they need to hear? (messages)
- From whom do they need to hear it? (messengers)
- How do we get them to hear it? (delivery)
- What have we got? (resources and/or strengths)
- What are our challenges? (gaps and/or externalities)
- How do we begin? (action plan)
- How will we know it's working, or not working? (evaluation)

Exercise 1 looks at the process of planning an advocacy strategy.

Analysis and problem definition

An analysis of the local context in light of any potential advocacy should be conducted prior to engaging in any advocacy activity. This should be based on a situation analysis or rapid assessment that has been carried out.

Child rights situation analysis

The child rights situation analysis (CRSA) helps to prioritise areas that need to be addressed. The focus in an emergency is often on immediate needs, but where possible, all of the questions below should be asked. They are pertinent to both direct implementation and advocacy activities.

- What rights are not realised for which children? (Researching, mapping, making visible).
- Why they are not realised? (Immediate and root causes).
- Who? or which institution bears responsibility? What are they and other actors currently doing? Identify specific officials and the office they hold.
- What are the constraints and obstacles to meeting responsibilities? (Capacity, legislative, resources, and attitude). What might help or hinder the further realisation of children's rights?

- Identifying how best to change: what strengths can be reinforced? What more needs to be done, or done differently, and with whom?

From *Advocacy matters: helping children change their world*

The analysis will identify the potential role of advocacy in bringing about change, combined with other interventions.

Two examples of advocacy issues in emergencies.

1 Humanitarian aid is not reaching children because government X insists on new and arduous restrictions. Advocacy might take place with the government concerned, if the organisation has effective political relationships. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN system's resident coordinator and/or the humanitarian coordinator can be lobbied to press the government about humanitarian space and access, or undertake advocacy with important donor governments to press the government to lift these measures.

2 Refugee children in country Y are not allowed to go to school. Advocacy should look at the root causes of this problem: is it due to legal restrictions for registering for school? Is it because the children do not have birth certificates? Is it because the schools do not have proper funding? Advocacy might focus on:

- supporting local schools that serve poorer host community children as well as refugees
- legal protection and registration
- pressing donors. For example, to support education activities for out-of-school children to prevent them from having to resort to prostitution.

The initial assessment may identify several issues that could be addressed through advocacy, and more may emerge in the course of humanitarian work. The questions below help prioritise the issues on which to focus.

Choosing which issues to focus on[8]

- What is the issue's relevance to your organisation's mission and strategies?
- What is its relevance to your direct interventions?
- Is documentation and research available? Do you have evidence about this problem or possible solutions from your direct interventions?
- Do you have a clear position and a positive alternative, or a clear policy solution?
- How do you assess your chances of success?
- What is the relative importance for children and potential impact on key groups of children affected?
- What is your assessment of the sensitivity and risk factors associated with this issue?
- What is the possibility of strategic alliances with partners?
- What strategic opportunities are there to address this issue?
- Do you have adequate resources and staff?
- What is the potential for increasing the role of children in civil society?
- Do you have sufficient understanding of power levels and dynamics, as well as of the cultural context?

Defining the strategic goal

The result of the above analysis will be to provide a clear definition and scope of the problem(s) for advocacy to address and the desired change. This is the strategic goal for designing an advocacy strategy.

Problem tree analysis One way to better understand the issue and problem is to create a visual representation of the issue, its root causes and its consequences in a problem tree (see **Exercise 2**).

Risk assessment

In many emergencies, advocacy initiatives will carry some type of risks. Risk analysis associated with possible advocacy strategies is essential to risk management in an emergency situation. Sensitive contexts should be considered in all advocacy, but humanitarian organisations which are committed to protecting children's rights cannot be silent witnesses when these are at risk or deliberately violated. At the same time, decision making should focus on strengthening and not jeopardising programming. A risk analysis exercise can help to determine how best to plan and implement effective advocacy by weighing security and programmatic risks to staff and communities.

Risks associated with poorly planned advocacy[9]

- reduced access
- threats to staff and programmes
- threats to local population
- loss of legitimacy and influence
- distortion of messages
- misunderstanding or conflict among partners and internally within the organisation
- misallocated resources

In assessing risks, remember that emergency work must always be based on humanitarian principles, so questions raised below under **Special considerations for advocacy in emergency situations** should be carefully considered.

For example, when working with children associated with armed forces or armed groups, staff working for humanitarian agencies can be targeted and agencies expelled from countries for speaking out or acting on child recruitment issues. Agencies will need to work closely with their security advisers and colleagues in order to decide if and how work relating to children associated with armed forces or armed groups can be accomplished safely. In some acute crises or situations where the national government is involved in recruitment and is highly sensitive to criticism, a watching brief or discrete monitoring activities may be all that is possible until the situation improves (see **Critical issue module 7** Children associated with armed forces or armed groups).

If a decision is taken at the country level to not engage in open advocacy, alternative avenues for addressing the situation of children and women in a particular location should be explored. For example, advocacy through a group of organisations is an approach often adopted by operational partners who do not want to compromise operations, relations or confidentiality. Headquarters or regional offices can also offer significant support for indirect advocacy. Another channel may be to work through human rights organisations without a presence in the country. These organisations can often undertake more public advocacy as speaking out will not jeopardise their staff or beneficiaries.

Regular risk analyses will need to be repeated as the work continues. A security officer should be included in these efforts. Below are some examples of the findings of country level risk analyses linked to the development of advocacy strategies. Each risk was then addressed in the planning process.

UNICEF risk analysis results from case studies[10]

Sri Lanka: children associated with armed forces or armed groups

UNICEF was at risk of jeopardising access to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and affected areas and populations when undertaking advocacy against underage recruitment after the 2002 ceasefire agreement had been signed. UNICEF had been shunned on several occasions for taking a strong stand on this matter in the past (sometimes for months; the LTTE refusing to communicate or denying access). Local people were reluctant to report underage recruitment out of fear of reprisals.

Risk management UNICEF had to find more creative ways of obtaining information, such as visiting villages inconspicuously, and at times using local transport for the sake of less visibility, and meeting families in NGO offices.

Afghanistan: education

UNICEF launched a **back to school** campaign in 2002. There were concerns regarding the safety of children being sent to school as some members of the former regime in Afghanistan had threatened that children would be killed if they went to school. Failure to implement a successful **back to school** initiative at this time would have been a huge disappointment to communities, since the programme had come to symbolise the benefits of peace.

Risk management UNICEF ensured a strong security system, involved local people and maintained a constant dialogue with community leaders.

Chechnya: landmines

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

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

Weighing the potential risks and benefits of advocacy

One of the simplest ways to conduct a risk analysis is by using the **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities,** and **threats** approach (SWOT). The outcome of these discussions can be used to inform a broader advocacy strategy. Questions should be considered from different partners' perspectives.

Some of the questions that can be used in a SWOT analysis are illustrated in **Exercise 3** and **Handout 4**.

A more detailed risk analysis can be carried out when an advocacy strategy has been developed, by identifying all the potential risks that might arise from the choice of tactics. These choices include whether to involve children in advocacy or campaigning, work in coalitions or partnerships, and whether to speak out or not speak out on sensitive or politicised issues. There will always be a certain level of risk; it is necessary to learn how to operate around it (see **Exercise 4** and **Handout 6** for more on assessing and managing risks).

Special considerations for advocacy in emergency situations

Emergency work must always be based on humanitarian principles, so the following should be carefully considered.

- Could advocacy have a negative impact on the people it is intended to assist? Advocacy should not cause more harm to the people who are being assisted, to the victims of a disaster, or to the community as a whole (the **do no harm** principle).
- Could advocacy affect access to those in need? Weigh the benefits of speaking out against the risk of having only limited access or even being forced to close down a programme (humanitarian access).
- Could advocacy in any way compromise the ability to act independently of all groups involved in the crisis, be they government, rebel groups, donors or other groups with power?
- Does advocacy respect the principle of impartiality, ie. not taking sides?
- Could advocacy affect agency staff's perceived independence and impartiality, ie. could it lead others to perceive that staff are not acting independently or impartially?

Different agencies respond differently to these considerations. For example, ICRC's mandate is to act as a neutral intermediary with all warring parties while simultaneously monitoring compliance with international humanitarian law at the country level in order to protect its humanitarian space and operations. However, some organisations argue that public advocacy, or speaking out on the situation for civilians in emergencies, is a critical responsibility towards the affected population, even if this can come at a cost in the short term.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Planning an advocacy strategy
Exercise 2	Identifying an advocacy issue using a problem tree
Exercise 3	SWOT analysis for advocacy
Exercise 4	Assessing the risks of advocacy in emergencies
Handout 1	Stages of the advocacy cycle
Handout 2	An advocacy planning cycle
Handout 3	Outline examples of a problem tree and solution tree
Handout 4	Example questions for SWOT analysis for advocacy
Handout 5	Case study
Handout 6	Risk assessment for advocacy

Section 4
Who can make the change?
Identifying advocacy targets and developing appropriate messages

Key learning points

- Defining and analysing power is integral to successful advocacy. Power is dynamic and ever changing and does not always operate in visible ways.
- It is important to understand the decision making process to know who has the most influence at different stages of the process.
- Stakeholder analysis helps to identify allies and opponents and their position and power in relation to an advocacy issue.
- From the stakeholder analysis advocacy targets and their influentials can be identified.
- Advocacy messages need to be clear and consistent, and tailored to the interests of the audience.

Advocacy and power

Defining and analysing power is an integral part of advocacy. Inadequate power analysis may lead to missed opportunities, poor strategic choices or risks. Power is dynamic and ever-changing, especially in an emergency situation, as many actors are constantly competing for power and space.

Remember political power does not always operate in visible ways.

Visible power	Formal rules, structures, authorities, institutions and procedures, for example: elections, laws and budgets.
Hidden power	Certain powerful people control the agenda. These dynamics exclude less powerful groups.
Invisible power	This level of power shapes values and norms, and thereby also people's beliefs and attitudes. Such power perpetuates patterns of domination and inferiority. This level is the most difficult to deal with, because social values are sensitive and personal.

These different kinds of power usually operate simultaneously, and different strategies are required for tackling different sorts of power. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that the different levels of power are not always what they seem to be.

For example, early marriage in rural Ethiopia.[11]

Power	Situation
Visible power	Legislation against early marriage is in place, but not enforced due to inadequate capacity among social authorities
Hidden power	Social affairs, including the issue of early marriage, have low priority in the power hierarchy in government. This contributes to the legislation not being enforced

Invisible power	Social norms and expectations force parents to follow the traditional practices

Advocacy and the decision-making process

As well as an understanding of power, a critical element in the success of any advocacy effort is a thorough understanding of any opportunities to influence the policy process, by understanding how policy decisions are made and the political climate in which they take place. In emergencies it is vital to know how decisions are made by different actors, such as humanitarian organisations and donors, the UN, the different parties to a conflict, as well as power bearers at the community level in affected areas. Furthermore, it is important to understand not only the official decision-making processes in these organisations but also the unofficial processes that influence what decisions are made.

There are five basic stages of decision making in policy processes. The exact methods, procedures and techniques vary widely among institutions, but these stages are present in some form in all decision-making processes:

1. agenda setting
2. formulation of policy
3. enactment of policy
4. implementation and enforcement
5. monitoring and evaluation.

Policy decision making can be through formal, informal and/or alternative processes, particularly in emergencies where decisions are often made very quickly. The formal decision-making process is the official procedure as stated by law or by documented organisational policy, as for instance the official approval or signature by heads of states. Informal processes, on the other hand, are activities and procedures in the decision-making process that occur concurrently with the formal process, but are not required by law or organisational policy. An alternative process is a process to influence decision making that exists wholly outside the official process. In emergency responses the power of these processes may also lie with, for instance, the UN humanitarian coordinator, donors or even armed groups. Understanding these processes will help decide where advocacy efforts can be targeted most effectively (see **Exercise 1**).

Analysis of advocacy stakeholders and targets

The next stage is to identify the advocacy targets, influentials and potential allies within the context of power and decision-making processes that have been identified above.

An advocacy who's who

Stakeholders are all those individuals or groups who may have an interest in the change being advocated.

Duty bearers are those people or institutions responsible for protecting child rights. They are often, but not always, key targets for advocacy.

Targets are the key individuals who are in a position to bring about the desired change.

Influentials are those people who have influence over targets.

Identify the targets; what are their interests?

Advocacy targets are the people who can make the decisions to bring about the changes being sought. Find out how willing they are to make the change, and how best to influence them. This often involves identifying their **influentials,** those people or institutions that influence the decision makers.

You need to find out where real power and influence lies. As described above, some are obvious, and some may be hidden. For example, while one person's job description may include responsibility for certain policy decisions, the actual power over those decisions may lie elsewhere. A target's capacity to make the change being sought will depend on their own power, their political support, and their resources.

An advocacy target's willingness to make the change will depend on different factors, including what they know about the advocacy issue and their opinion about it. It will also depend on their interest in the issue, which could be personal or political. For example, they may have had personal experience of the consequences, or they may simply recognise it as a key issue with the electorate that they must act on if they wish to keep their position at the next election.

Exercise 2 goes through the process of analysing stakeholders in terms of their power and their support for an issue.

Once more is known about a target's interest and willingness to change, the best way to approach them can be determined. It may be to work with them in a cooperative way, they may require some persuasion, or they may need to be challenged openly.

The key targets for advocacy are the so-called duty bearers: those bodies or individuals that represent institutionalised power which gives them the responsibility to ensure children's rights are protected and authority to make positive changes for children. The target is the person (or group of people) with the power to respond to a demand and move the political process in relation to the issue.

When identifying advocacy targets, it is important to keep in mind that stakeholders, duty bearers, targets and influentials are not necessarily distinct groups or individuals but may overlap. In short, certain individuals are likely to belong to more than one of these groups.

Advocacy targets in emergency situations

- National governments or de facto authorities in affected countries. These will need to be specified, ie. national or local, which department.
- International bilateral donors.
- UN agencies and structures (eg. UNICEF, UNHCR, clusters) at field and international level and their coordination mechanism. In particular, the cluster leads (whether UN agencies or NGOs) if established, the UN country team and humanitarian coordinator (if present), and the Office of the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General for children and armed conflict or Resolution 1612.
- UN Security Council members, particularly the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the UK and the US).
- Regional organisations or groupings such as the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).
- Foreign offices involved in political negotiations.

Targets will depend on the level of advocacy. For example, advocacy concerning policies and implementation will normally be focused on governmental and administrative bodies. Advocacy concerning practices that are harmful to children (eg. female circumcision or early marriage) will often be directed at informal leaders (eg. religious and community leaders, school committees). Individual parents are not normally the focus of advocacy attention, however, groups of parents, such as a school committee, can be a focus of advocacy actions.

Stakeholders

In addition to the key targets and influentials there are many other people who can affect the issue being advocated, or who will be affected by the change being sought. Children, communities, and partner organisations are among the key stakeholders.

Depending on their attitude to the change being sought, targets and their influentials as well as other stakeholders, can be seen as allies or opponents. Advocacy will be more effective if it is supported by other stakeholders, and working in coalitions can be particularly important in unstable and risky situations. But there may be costs and risks involved in working closely with others.

Define advocacy messages and identify messengers

Advocacy targets and allies are the key audiences who need to be influenced with advocacy messages. Reaching audiences requires crafting and framing a set of messages that will be persuasive. Although these messages must always be rooted in the core evidence, they also need to be tailored differently to different audiences, depending on what they are ready to hear. In most cases, advocacy messages will have two basic components:

1 an appeal to what is right

2 an appeal to the audience's self-interest

In order to develop a key message:

- short-term messages should be combined with long-term change objectives
- messages should be as inclusive as possible
- combine needs with solutions, by including:
  - an analysis of the problem and its causes
  - responsibility for solving the problem
  - possible solutions or recommendations for action.

As mentioned in **Section 1**, it is often very useful to develop a **one minute advocacy message** which can be used at any opportunity, for example, a brief, unexpected encounter with a decision maker, or a short media interview.

statement + evidence + example + action desired

The message must be clear and compelling, whether it is a private meeting or a public interview. It should be short in length and brief in the number of points raised. Credible messengers should also be selected according to the tone and content of a message.

Exercise 3 details the process of formulating an advocacy message.

Possible opponents, contrary arguments and potential responses should be considered in advance of message delivery.

Delivering the message

The channels used to deliver the message, and who delivers it, the messenger, is as important as the message content. All of the different means of communicating messages should be considered: children's voices, pod-casts, interviews, photo essays and film and work should be done with communications staff to realise them.

Develop a series of advocacy outputs, be they talking points, policy positions, short briefings, press statements, as needed. Direct advocacy (presenting a case directly to the decision maker or a key influential) can be used, or using the media to get a message to a wider audience.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Mapping power and decision making
Exercise 2	Identifying advocacy targets and how to influence them
Exercise 3	Producing an advocacy message
Handout 1	An example of a decision-making process
Handout 2	Levels of support for advocacy and power
Handout 3	Sample stakeholder analysis
Handout 4	Case study
Handout 5	Notes on developing an advocacy message
Handout 6	What do your advocacy targets know and care about?

Section 5
The steps to achieving change
Developing an advocacy strategy

Key learning points

- Clear goals and objectives are required for successful advocacy.
- It is critical to gather as much information as possible on potential targets and how they can be influenced.
- Advocacy work is often best carried out along with other organisations that have similar goals.
- Advocacy in emergencies should be evidence based and properly sourced, as well documented evidence is crucial to support advocacy.

Step 1 Set advocacy goals and SMART objectives

Successful advocacy requires a clear idea of what change is sought. Goals and objectives should be considered in defining this.

An **advocacy goal** describes the change being sought. It is the long-term result of an advocacy effort and a vision of change for children. It can be ambitious and aim at big results to encourage inspired messaging, increased funding and support from partners.

For example: reduce cases of gender based violence against children and women in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

An advocacy objective is the specific change that can be brought about that contributes to reaching the goal. This can also be called a **change objective**. It is specific and measurable and defines what will be accomplished, where, when, and with whom. Generally, the time frame for an advocacy objective will be one to three years, and the objective should focus on a specific action that an institution can take.

Objectives should be **SMART** specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and resourced, and timebound. They should also be change oriented rather than activity oriented. They should describe the change intended, not the intended activities. The change should be quantified and the objective should state who will do it and when.

Advocacy strategies usually have a number of different objectives that all contribute to achieving the goal and overall vision.

For example: increase the number of successful prosecutions against perpetrators of rape in North Kivu district in DRC by the end of 2010.

See **Exercise 1** and **Handout 1**

Step 2 Choose the most effective way to influence targets

Having identified the targets and influentials, the next step is to decide how to influence them in order to achieve the objectives. Targets sharing similar beliefs, attitudes and interests with advocates can be easier to influence than those targets who do not. It is, therefore, important to get as much information as possible on targets' interests and attitudes from all available sources.

The next step is to choose the most effective ways of influencing a particular target. Based on what has worked best in the past, the following approaches (or a combination) can be adopted.

Cooperative
As an insider: for example, working with government to find solutions. This approach involves developing relationships with targets and gaining their trust. This allows for direct access and an understanding of targets' positions and the processes in which they are involved. The potential drawback is that this type of approach may compromise values, exclude key stakeholders and risk lending legitimacy to the target and being misrepresented.

Confrontational
As a complete outsider: forcing an issue onto the agenda through for instance, mass mobilisation or media campaigns. This approach can create a higher profile and greater freedom of action. On the other hand, it can be counter-productive if the target feels driven into a corner and can damage future relationships, lose funding and risk marginalisation and the perception of radicalisation. This approach should be considered very carefully.

Persuasive
As a critical insider: presenting evidence in the hope of getting the targets to recognise the merits of the arguments. By avoiding some of the pitfalls of the two previous approaches, this approach can provide more opportunities for working with others and is often seen as more neutral and less aggressive. However, the possible drawback is being perceived as **sitting on the fence**.

See **Exercise 2** and **Handout 2**

Step 3 Identify opportunities for advocacy

Any social or political event that ties in with the issue can be used during the decision-making period as an advocacy opportunity.

Advocacy opportunities in an emergency could include:

- field based opportunities: meetings with parties to the conflict, local authorities and communities, other agencies and organisations
- meetings with donors and donor conferences
- workshops and trainings
- anniversaries
- peace talks
- deal-making UN conferences
- media opportunities
- the interagency planning and appeal process
- humanitarian coordination and sectoral or cluster working groups
- a celebrity visit.

Attending events requires time and resources. It is important to choose events carefully, on the basis that they provide a real opportunity for some or all of the following.

- **Potential for meeting or influencing decision makers** to make relationships and influence decisions.
- **Potential for networking** with potential allies, with journalists.
- **Media attention** to raise public awareness of the issue.
- **A focus on children** with an opportunity to involve children if appropriate and according to special considerations.
- **An agenda that is not too crowded** so that the issue is not overshadowed by other concerns.

See **Exercise 3**

In order to take advantage of an advocacy opportunity, there must be a clear idea of what the intended outcome will be, and how it will help achieve the advocacy objective. It is a good idea to have a clear advocacy message, and the right supporting material to help deliver the message effectively, for example, reports with executive summary and posters.

International instruments and reporting processes

Internal instruments can be very useful advocacy opportunities. For example, the periodic reporting process to the CRC can highlight the imbalance between State obligations on paper and implementation on the ground. It provides a framework for analysing national policy and practice, creating linkages, raising awareness, capacity building for local NGOs, facilitating child participation, and more. The Optional protocol to the CRC on children and armed conflict (CAC) is particularly relevant in emergencies.

Such strategies can be very effective, but require resources and preparation and can be time-consuming, and are best done by working in partnership or through coalitions.

Another key instrument for emergencies of a conflict nature is the monitoring and reporting of egregious violations under UN Security Council Resolution 1612. NGO partners to this mechanism will need to consider the risks of being involved in collecting data on such violations by named parties to a conflict and this process of risk analysis often precedes decisions on how to become involved.

Monitoring and reporting of egregious violations under UN Security Council Resolution 1612

In July 2005, UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1612 requested the immediate implementation of a mechanism to monitor six grave violations of children's rights in armed conflict. These violations are:

- killing and maiming
- sexual violence
- abduction
- recruitment into armed forces
- attacks on schools and hospitals
- denial of access to humanitarian assistance.

This resolution is one of the most groundbreaking steps the Security Council has taken to protect children, and indeed civilians, affected by conflict. By December 2007, a working group, set up under the Security Council, had considered 15 public country reports generated by the Monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM), and issued a number of conclusions and recommendations aimed at reducing the levels of grave violations described in the reports.

The objectives of the MRM:

- Provide accurate, objective, reliable and timely information to the UN Security Council and to other actors with a mandate to respond to violations of children's rights and protections under international law.
- Facilitate analysis and sharing of information and data for the purposes of informing response towards prevention.
- Facilitate and trigger local, national, regional and international responses in cases where violations have been identified, verified and reported.
- Assist in institutionalising (or mainstreaming) systematic approaches to monitoring and reporting and child rights.
- Inform policy development and programme design or orientation to respond to grave violations against children.

Step 4 Develop alliances and partnerships

Advocacy work is often best carried out along with other organisations that have similar goals. Identifying and developing ways of working with other organisations can be challenging, but when possible, is often crucial to success due to mandates and timing.

Partnership between different organisations can help work to progress and is a key principle of advocacy strategies. Even without a formal partnership, a variety of organisations working on different strategies in different arenas can be effective and allow for different organisations to focus on certain areas, but can also lead to conflicts. Partnership is more difficult among organisations pursuing very different

styles and strategies, although this can also be an advantage by complementing each other's strengths, but a lack of partnership can actually undermine progress.

Depending on the nature of the advocacy initiative, a successful partnership will be characterised by the following elements.

- A clearly defined relationship: common principles, resource allocation, agreement criteria, independence.
- A review of formal partnership agreements. For example, cooperation agreements, memoranda of understandings.
- Clear decision making and communications mechanisms.
- Involvement of all members.
- Shared information and agreements on appropriate mechanisms to do so. For example, regular meetings.

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

Working with partners can be extremely strategic on controversial issues or those requiring large scale, multi-agency executable change, showing both solidarity on issues as well as an opening for certain groups to speak out alone. Partnerships can also work together subtly and on quiet research or information gathering aimed at achieving broad goals.

South Sudan and Darfur[12]

A multi-sector nutrition survey in South Sudan and Darfur in 2005 was conducted by UNICEF and WFP along with partners to form the basis to advocate for strengthened nutrition programming in these areas. As a first step to encouraging increased UNICEF presence, the authors of the survey presented their findings to the UN Country Team in Sudan, but then also to the UNICEF Emergencies' Meeting in New York Headquarters in order to target senior decision makers in UNICEF, as a tool to seek buy-in both inside and eventually outside the organisation. Improved nutrition programming was then raised within the interagency context for additional resource mobilisation and strengthened UN coordination on the ground.

UNICEF Sierra Leone builds capacity of faith-based organisations to deliver advocacy messages on HIV and AIDS[13]

The Country Office in Sierra Leone channelled its HIV and AIDS awareness strategies through existing national religious leadership structures. UNICEF secured the personal commitment of the individual heads of the denominations, who then rallied and gained the commitment of the Inter-religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRC-SL) the umbrella group for faith organisations in the country. The IRC-SL then garnered support from their networks of parishes and mosques all the way to the village level. The strategy entailed four key steps.

1 Enhancing the capacity of the faith leaders to effectively participate in the programme.

2 Developing a set of key messages that could form the basis of sermons and dialogue between the religious leaders and their communities.

3 Organising a series of high level advocacy activities that would culminate in one big national event.

4 Sensitising communities through tours and visits in the districts and chiefdoms with a focus on HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support.

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

See **Exercise 4** and **Handout 5**

Children's right to participation; involving children in advocacy

Children have a unique voice; they talk about issues clearly and simply. They also cut through technical jargon and are not interested in politics. Decision makers do not usually come into contact with children, so when they do, they often find it refreshing and they take notice of what children say.

Children can participate in advocacy in different ways. They can be involved in advocacy that is led by adults on issues concerning children, or they can be empowered to be advocates themselves. Organisations that work on issues affecting children need to move from talking for children to giving children opportunities to speak, thus empowering them to speak for themselves and their peers.

Some of the benefits of child-led advocacy.

- Bringing ideas from children's reality; adults will be able to see the problem and the solutions from children's perspectives.
- Children and young people have ownership of the solutions.
- Children seen advocating for their rights can lead to acceptance of children as social actors and active citizens.

- Children may learn new skills and gain self-confidence.
- When children act it often generates more commitment from adults.

Child-led advocacy depends on good support from adults. For example, providing relevant information in a child-friendly format, that recognises diversity (gender, age, ethnic groups, disability) and takes into consideration the children's ages, languages and abilities.

Children's networks in northern Uganda

As part of a community-based child protection response in camps in northern Uganda, Save the Children held workshops with children's networks to support them to come up with strategies to address issues affecting them and their communities. Through a number of participatory activities, they identified and prioritised issues that they felt were important to them, and came up with ideas of how they could address them. Being ambitious, the group in Pader Camp (40 children) prioritised ending the war. Through a visioning exercise they came up with many ideas to achieve this: from sending a child representative to the peace talks in South Sudan, to speaking with community leaders and parents about solving conflict in their communities. While the groups focused on community level work, the facilitators helped arrange an opportunity for the children to get their views to MPs and journalists travelling to the peace talks. They selected two of their group to go to Kampala to represent them at a press conference with journalists and MPs and to visit the parliament. Before travelling, the group got together and planned the key messages they wanted their representatives to take. Individuals also wrote poems and letters and drew pictures that were taken and shown. They delivered their messages which were published in national papers and on the radio. Those who listened promised to take their messages to the peace talks.

Children's ideas can be elicited and participatory approaches practiced in a number of practical ways. For example:

- through discussion groups in schools
- formal participation in workshops and conferences
- through ensuring capacity building for children in communities.

Children may advocate in different ways, such as through art or theatre, or by being involved in campaigns. When involving children in advocacy it is important to remember the **do no harm** principle, to ensure against negative consequences on the people it is intended to assist (see **Special considerations for advocacy in emergency situations** in **Section 3**).

Foundation module 4 Participation and inclusion provides a framework to help plan how to involve children in advocacy.

See **Exercise 5**

Step 5 Collect evidence to support advocacy

Advocacy in emergencies should be evidence based and properly sourced, as well documented evidence is crucial to support advocacy. Often, there is a need to change the opinions of targets that are powerful and/or do not agree with given advocacy objectives; they may well try to discredit the information upon which the case for advocacy is built. Evidence can be compared to the foundation of a house: if it is weak, the argument will eventually fall down.

Some of the information needed during the situation analysis or rapid assessment will probably have already been gathered. At this stage, an assessment should be made of what evidence exists, and what extra may be needed.

Questions to ask:

- What evidence is available to support the desired advocacy messages? For example, mortality surveys, research studies, reports from communities.
- Is the evidence credible? Advocacy is only as strong as the information on which it is based.
- What further information needs to be collected? Is it feasible to collect the information?
- Will the evidence still be relevant and up-to-date when the advocacy message is delivered?

(Criteria for evidence for advocacy are given in **Handout 11**)

If additional evidence is needed, this may come from primary sources (your own research) or secondary data, including previous reports, evaluations, or other research papers. In reviewing secondary information sources, it is advisable to consider their current validity by asking the following questions.

- **Source** Who is the information from? What is their track record? Known bias?
- **Transparency** Sources, methodology and limitations of data should be noted.
- **Validity** Was there clarity in design methodology?
- **Precision** How certain is the data? How much can be generalised?
- **Who** is excluded?
- **Bias among primary sources and data collectors** How was this dealt with?
- **Plausibility** Does it make sense? Does it fit with what is known?
- **Logical causal analysis** Are conclusions supported by the data?
- **Timeliness** Are findings still valid?
- **Would** this evidence hold up in court?

See **Exercise 6**

The Chechnya case study from UNICEF, below, is an example of how a strong evidence base can strengthen advocacy developed with partners.

Landmines in Chechnya: The role of evidence[14]

Chechnya is one of the worst mine affected areas in the world and has the highest ratio of the number of victims relative to the size of the population. UNICEF carried out advocacy to change government policy: an agreement to minimise the use of landmines, ratification of the global Mine Ban Treaty, and urging the government to undertake de-mining activities.

It was well known that a significant number of children were exposed to landmines on a daily basis but there was no consistent data. The lack of internal capacity to collect data and the variety of different approaches to data collection by partners created confusion and undermined advocacy efforts. UNICEF and others worked to create a common approach to definitions, terminology, and data collection methods, and then carried out a survey.

The statistical data highlighted Chechnya as one of the five worst landmine affected places in the world, with one of the highest ratio of victims to overall population in the world. This supported advocacy messages aimed at the government and other targets.

The improved data collection system with partners has informed future programming and advocacy efforts, and has helped influence the government to take steps to address the issue (for example, ratification by the Russian Federation of the Convention on certain conventional weapons in 2005). The government has also begun de-mining activities and UNICEF Chechnya itself has been influenced to increase its response to landmines and child protection.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Setting advocacy aims and objectives
Exercise 2	Tactics for advocacy
Exercise 3	Identifying advocacy opportunities
Exercise 4	Deciding who to work with and how
Exercise 5	How to involve children in advocacy
Exercise 6	The importance of good evidence for advocacy
Handout 1	Tips to help you be SMART, change oriented and child focused
Handout 2	Pathways of influence
Handout 3	Case study
Handout 4	What makes a good opportunity for advocacy?
Handout 5	Benefits and challenges of working with others
Handout 6	Case study
Handout 7	Case study
Handout 8	Working with children in advocacy

Handout 9 Samples of evidence

Handout 10 Sample press release

Handout 11 Checklist for research to influence policy

Section 6
Advocacy tools

Key learning points

- There is a wide range of advocacy tools available according to the approach and tactics most suited to the context and targets.
- One commonly used tool is face-to-face meetings with decision makers. There are simple tips to make the best possible use of such meetings.
- Work with the media is another tool and should be used with great care, especially in unstable or emergency situations.
- Public campaigning can add strength to advocacy, and is essential to create public support for the changes being sought but should be used with care in emergency situations.

Different tools for advocacy

As shown in **Section 1** there are a wide range of advocacy tools to be used to get the message across. Some examples of different advocacy tools:

- letters to a government or head of state
- private meetings with a high-level national official
- informal, confidential discussions with both sides to a conflict
- press releases
- radio campaigns
- public forums or events ie. films, lectures, panels, photograph exhibitions
- multi-donor funding appeals
- published documents such as survey assessment, child mortality surveys, and facts and figures. evidence-based reports
- briefings to donors
- visits from the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator or other high level UN or NGO officials
- missions from UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors
- training for peacekeepers or armed forces
- training for other humanitarian actors and government representatives
- coalitions with other key players
- public campaigns

See **Exercise 1**

Three of the most commonly used tools include direct advocacy with decision makers, working with the media, and public campaigning. These are described below.

Direct advocacy with targets

Direct advocacy (sometimes called lobbying) involves direct communication with decision maker s and others who have influence over them. Direct advocacy is about educating and convincing them to support and advance an agenda. Its primary targets are the people with the power to influence a policy change on a particular issue.

Direct advocacy can occur either formally, through visits to and briefings of decision makers and others, or informally, through conversations in corridors, restaurants and parking lots. as decision makers go about their daily lives, or at events that are not directly related to advocacy.

There are four key steps that will help direct advocacy to be effective.

1 **Become familiar with the 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 (strong supporter, passive supporter, fence sitter (neutral), passive opponent, all out opponent) and how much influence they have.

3 **Inform and build relationships** Make visits and give 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 people's voices. Find a champion. Present him or her with a specific problem and recommendations. Keep track of contacts, don't let them off the hook, and always credit them when advances are made.

4 **Get attention and show power** Time media, outreach and mobilisation activities in such a way that decision makers are aware of the support behind the proposals.

Exercise 2 goes through the process of carrying out a meeting and **Handout 2** provides tips for preparing and conducting a visit with decision makers.

Working with the media

If the public has been identified as a means of influencing the main decision maker, working with the media becomes essential. However, it can be risky in emergency or unstable situations, as media attention could have serious repercussions on the programme work. For example, many NGOs have been reluctant to do media work on Darfur as speaking out could put their staff, programmes and the people they are assisting in jeopardy.

To work with the media, first prepare key messages for public dissemination and then identify a key spokesperson or spokespeople that will be available to talk to the media. It is essential to work closely with communications staff at field and head office level, and with other allies or coalition members to make sure media contact is controlled and consistent. If staff is contacted by a member of the media, they should ask what the deadline is, assure the reporter or producer that someone will get back to them shortly and then be in touch with relevant media contacts immediately.

Contact with the media can be reactive, when it is initiated by a journalist, or proactive, when an advocate seeks to use them to help get messages across.

To use the media proactively, first identify which media outlets reach the advocacy targets. Mass media is the best way to reach as many people as possible, but in order

for a specific minister to change his or her mind, it helps to find out what media outlet they may read or listen to.

Be creative about how to get the media to cover the issue. Field visits are useful for a journalist to see the issue for him or herself, or to identify a child whose situation personifies the issue and invite a responsible journalist to interview them to give it a human face.

An advocacy press release needs to be presented as news. Journalists need to be given a reason to be interested in covering an issue. Look for key dates and events that lend themselves to discussion of the issue. Always include a punchy quote that gets to the heart of the issue, state it clearly and make sure it is attributed to someone relevant. Avoid jargon; few journalists understand the acronyms and language of humanitarian work, development and child protection.

Mobilising the public through campaigning

Mobilising public support for an advocacy issue can help influence decision makers through public pressure, although the power of the public to influence decision makers varies from country to country. In some countries citizens can exert considerable influence on decision makers through democratic processes. In others, their influence is much more limited. It is important to be realistic about what the public can really help to achieve.

Campaigning is also often used to influence public attitudes, norms and practices towards an advocacy issue. For example, UNICEF and partners organised a public protest march against impunity for sexual violence crimes as part of its advocacy against sexual exploitation and abuse in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The best way to mobilise the public will depend on the context, and on what the public can realistically be expected to do. The media may be useful to spread messages to the public. Individual events, meetings or workshops can be organised, or a larger public awareness campaign can be develop to bring together a wide range of activities.

For example, an event called Gulu walk has been held for the last several years across Canada, the US and other parts of the world to raise public awareness on the humanitarian crisis in northern Uganda and replicate the journey that so-called **night commuter** children took every evening to leave their families in IDP camps and seek the relative safety of shelters in towns.

Campaigning methods include: petitions, speeches, debates, letters, press conferences, symbolic actions (flags, drama), public demonstrations, mass communications (billboards, radio, internet, TV, pop concerts, festivals, PR activity with celebrities), mobilising people to write to decision makers or other influentials, and so on.

Campaigning with children can include all of the above plus:

- debating clubs (inviting politicians)
- youth forums and youth parliaments
- speakers' tours
- children's choirs
- bands

- theatre groups
- essay, poetry, drawing, and painting competitions
- marches or vigils with visual props and symbols
- exhibitions or showings of photos or videos taken by children
- peer education.

Budget analysis

Budget analysis is becoming an increasingly effective tool for organisations in their advocacy with governments. It uses information from government budgets to provide evidence of spending priorities, and to show trends over time.

For example, budget analysis was used to show that DFID funding for humanitarian work had decreased in recent years. This has been used to advocate for increased funding.

See **Handout 6**.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Selecting advocacy tools
Exercise 2	Advocating
Exercise 3	Conducting a media interview
Handout 1	Examples of tools
Handout 2	Tips for direct advocacy with decision makers
Handout 3	Meeting role play
Handout 4	Working with the media
Handout 5	Media role play
Handout 6	Budget monitoring for advocacy

Section 7
Planning, monitoring and evaluation

Key learning points

- An action plan is needed to state exactly what needs to be done by when in order to take advantage of advocacy opportunities.
- It is important to be flexible and opportunistic, while also being prepared with messages and material.
- Continuous monitoring of advocacy progress and the external environment (opportunities and work with others) is essential to keep on top of a fast moving situation and changes in political power.
- Evaluating advocacy is difficult, but efforts can be made to track expected milestones and outcomes on the way to achieving objectives. Important lessons can be learned about how to improve advocacy in emergencies.

Build an action plan

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

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

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

UNICEF's advocacy action plan for northern Uganda[15]

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

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

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

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

See **Handout 1**

Monitoring

During implementation, regular monitoring should take place to keep track of progress and shape future activities. This is particularly important in emergencies where the situation can change very quickly. A strategy can be evaluated by revisiting each step in the process, asking questions such as, *'Are the decision makers being reached?'* It is important to be able to revise the strategy and to adapt or discard those elements of a strategy that are not effective if the results of monitoring and evaluation indicate that such a change is necessary. Monitoring should be as simple and effective as possible. It may simply take the form of regular meetings between key advocacy actors.

Continuous monitoring is important to ensure that lessons are learned from what has been done and to enable a quick response to any new developments. Monitoring through regular meetings and updates is a way of building and strengthening relationships with allies and team members, and making sure that all share essential information. Monitoring also provides documentation that can be used for an evaluation of advocacy strategies.

As well as monitoring the advocacy process, progress toward long-term goals and objectives should be regularly assessed. This helps ensure making the best possible decisions about how to move forward.

A framework for understanding possible outcomes and impact of advocacy is described below. A larger framework looking at outcomes in all five dimensions of change is provided in **Handout 3**.

Framework for understanding possible outcomes and impact of advocacy work.

Dimension of work	Indicators of change and longer-term impact
Policy, implementation, or activity change	● Changed policy ● Changes in legislation ● Positive change in people's lives as a result of the policy or legislation change
Local capacity building activities with: ● NGOs ● movements or networks ● community-based organisations ● popular organisations ● partner organisations ● youth groups and others	● Number of new advocacy strategies used by civil society groups ● Civil groups active in influencing decision makers in ways that will benefit affected populations ● Affected populations possess a greater awareness of their human rights and possible mechanisms for speaking out against rights violations as well as mechanisms for redress ● Increased participation of civil society groups in influencing decisions ● Change in accountability and transparency of public institutions

Evaluation

Evaluation takes a more independent look at the impact of advocacy work after a longer period. It focuses on impact in terms of achieving policy change objectives and in other areas of change, such as increasing the capacity of civil society, or creating new ways for children to participate in decision making. The evaluation findings can help improve future advocacy by suggesting different tactics to achieve a particular policy change or by analysing more generally how to improve advocacy in emergencies. See **Handout 2** for more detail on evaluating advocacy.

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

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Monitoring and evaluating advocacy
Handout 1	The action plan
Handout 2	Practical ways of monitoring advocacy in an emergency
Handout 3	Advocacy outcomes and impact
Handout 4	Examples of indicators and activities
Handout 5	Examples of long-term outcomes
Handout 6	Table of activities, outputs and indicators of outcome and impact

Endnotes

1 *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies. Draft framework and guidelines for discussion and consultation* UNICEF, 2007 (final draft)

2 *Advocacy matters: helping children change their world; an International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy* 2007

3 *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies. Draft framework and guidelines for discussion and consultation* UNICEF, 2007 (final draft)

4 Case study from: *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies. Draft framework and guidelines for discussion and consultation* UNICEF, 2007 (final draft)

5 Ibid

6 *Getting it right for children. A practitioner's guide to child rights programming for children* International Save the Children Alliance, 2007

7 *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies. Draft framework and guidelines for discussion and consultation* UNICEF, 2007 (final draft)

8 *Advocacy matters: helping children change their world; an International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy*, 2007

9 *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies. Draft framework and guidelines for discussion and consultation* UNICEF, 2007 (final draft)

10 Ibid

11 *Child rights advocacy operational guidelines* Save the Children Denmark, 2006

12 *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies. Draft framework and guidelines for discussion and consultation* UNICEF, 2007 (final draft)

13 *Advocacy in emergencies: framework and guidelines* UNICEF, 2007

14 Ibid

15 Ibid

Further reading

- *Act now! Some highlights from children's participation in the regional consultation for the UN Secretary General's study on violence against children* Save the Children, 2006
- *Advocacy matters: helping children change their world; an International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy*, Save the Children, 2007
- *Boys for change* Save the Children, 2007
- *Saving lives, protecting children: advocacy in emergencies* UNICEF, New York 2008
- 'Why effective national child protection systems are needed' *Save the Children's key recommendations in response to the UN Secretary General's Study on violence against children* Save the Children, 2006
- *Working for change in education: a handbook for planning advocacy* Save the Children UK, 2000
- *Working for child rights from a budget perspective* Save the Children Sweden, 2005 (studies and experiences from a number of countries)