Save the Children

Youth

Care & Protection of Children in Emergencies
A Field Guide · Marc Sommers

Cover photo by Jimmie Briggs:
Trained in emergency first aid by the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees (UPMRC), a local Save the Children partner, teenagers provide medical care for wounded civilians at the site of clashes and attacks. One of the oldest Palestinian NGOs, UPMRC addresses overlooked community health needs, particularly for women and children, throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

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FOREWORD

In today's humanitarian crises, civilians face ever more attacks and targeting by perpetrators of violence. And amongst these civilians — largely women and children — youth seem to have been forgotten in humanitarian priorities. Caught somewhere between their young childhood and full adulthood, youth struggle with their own identity as they watch the social fabric collapse around them: homes are destroyed, communities are divided by violence, and their own hopes for a better future are crushed.

In situations that pose a violent, extreme or sudden threat to the survival and well-being of children and women, Save the Children's basic objectives are to *ensure the survival* of the most vulnerable children and women; *assure protection* against violence and exploitation; *support the rehabilitation and recovery* of children, families and communities; and *promote lasting solutions* by creating and strengthening the capacity of families and communities to create an environment in which children can thrive.

Years of experience have shown that youth tend to fall between the cracks during emergencies: while refugee children may be underserved in many crises, adolescents and youth are often forgotten completely. 'Youth' covers both adolescents (with rights under the CRC) as well as young adults, crossing convenient categories and too easily ignored. These young people — who are no longer children requiring full protection from their families, and yet are not recognized as adults with full social responsibility — are an important part of any refugee population and key to social rehabilitation. Communities may see young people as a threat to their own security, while humanitarian agencies too easily dismiss adolescents and young adults as too difficult to approach. Save the Children is committed to ensuring that youth do indeed have a voice in their own future, and providing them with the skills they need to realize their own hopes and dream.

This *Field Guide to Youth Programs in Emergencies* provides lessons learned in this area to date, and is a complement to more specific guides in this series such as *Child Soldiers* and *Education*. But even with this attempt at drawing together our experience and that of other organizations, it is clear that much more still needs to be done to support youth and identify which approaches have a long-lasting impact on their lives. This Guide is only the beginning, and I hope that it will serve to provoke new thinking and even more successful models for this important population.

Dr. Neil Boothby
Director, Children in Crisis
Save the Children

INTRODUCTION

Save the Children is pleased to introduce the *Field Guide to Youth Programs in Emergencies*, as one in a series compiled through its Children and War Capacity Building Initiative. Through this initiative, Save the Children has made a clear institutional commitment to providing quality programs which support the well-being of affected populations in emergencies and crisis, and to ensuring that SC staff have the knowledge and skills they need to continue this important work.

After consultations with staff at both headquarters and in the field, it became clear that there was a need not only for a thematic overview on key protection concerns, but also a quick and practical reference for practitioners when facing new emergencies or designing new programs. With this in mind, the Children in Crisis Unit has designed this series of field guides as the basis for in-depth training sessions on priority subjects, while including quick implementation tools such as checklists of key concerns and rapid guideline references in a portable format.

The field guides have been designed specifically for SC field, headquarters, and partner organization staff members who are involved in the design and management of children and war programs. As such, the series builds on Save the Children's specific approach and programming principles while also bringing in best practices and examples from other agencies' experience. At the same time, however, we hope that these field guides may also prove useful to other organizations engaged in similar programming and contribute to the further development of child-focused emergency programs within the international community.

The *Field Guide to Youth Programs in Emergencies* has greatly benefited from the contributions of Betsy Mull, Mark Lorey, Amy Hepburn, Tanya Wolfram, and Naoko Otani during production and field testing. Dr. Laura Arntson has added important insight into the monitoring and evaluation sections. Valuable comments from Amy Weissman and Jane Lowicki have enriched the document with their perspective and experience.

Youth programming in emergencies has been largely ignored, and this field guide is an important step towards both raising awareness of youths' specific concerns as well as supporting Save the Children's staff in their work with this population. In crisis situations, immediate protection for youth is as important as working with them to plan their own future. Growing into adulthood can be difficult in any setting, but in a refugee camp the challenges can seem overwhelming. With this guide in hand, I hope that you will be led to new thinking about how to work with young people and help them realize their own vision for a brighter future.

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I. OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW OF THE CHILDREN AND WAR PROGRAM FIELD GUIDE SERIES

This field guide is one in a series compiled by Save the Children (SC) as part of its Children and War Capacity Building Initiative. The SC Children in Crisis Unit developed this initiative in order to support SC staff in responding to the priority care and protection needs of children and adolescents during new emergencies and in situations of chronic armed conflict or displacement.

Save the Children recognizes children as being any person under the age of 18, including adolescents as well as younger children. Children of all ages are of key concern to Save the Children, and their specific needs and resources are priority considerations in any programming decision This field guide addresses the needs of youth, which includes adolescents as well as young adults: the working definition of 'youth' covers young people between the ages of 13 and 25.

The field guides are intended to provide comprehensive, hands-on guidance for programming in each of six key thematic areas during emergencies and crisis:

- ***Education in emergencies:*** focusing on the transition from non-formal to formal education activities in order to foster sustainability and community involvement.
- ***Youth:*** an approach to planning non-formal education, vocational training, community mobilization, and other activities for 13-25 year-olds.
- ***Separated children:*** care and protection of children separated from families as well as steps to take toward reunification.
- ***Child soldiers:*** social reintegration and the prevention of recruitment of girls and boys.
- ***Sexual and gender-based violence:*** prevention of violence and support to SGBV survivors.
- ***Psychosocial care and support:*** a resource kit applicable for all areas of children and war programming.

The field guides have been cross-referenced and designed as complementary documents. While there are clearly a number of areas of overlap among the themes, repetition has

been minimized while ensuring that each field guide remains a useful stand-alone document. Each field guide is also accompanied by a CD-ROM which contains key reference materials and international guidelines for further consideration, as well as practical tools which can be easily modified for use in a specific situation.

OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD GUIDE FOR YOUTH IN CRISIS PROGRAMMING

The *Field Guide to Youth Programs in Emergencies* is intended for Save the Children staff and partners designing and implementing either a program focused fully on youth, or a youth-focused component of a broader program for communities in crisis. This field guide is meant to be useful both for staff who have no experience with youth programming and for experienced staff who wish to improve their understanding of particular aspects of youth programs.

The field guide is composed of five parts and two appendices. Section II, *The Issues*, details the difficulty of defining 'youth', explains the reasons for targeting assistance to support youth, and discusses common challenges facing youth in times of crisis. Section III presents the *International Framework* of legal parameters and policies relevant to youth programs.

Section IV, *Programming Guidance*, presents key lessons learned about programming for and with youth in crisis worldwide, both in traditional emergency settings and other situations. Section IV then program examples as well as common obstacles to developing programs for youth in crisis. The last part of this section discusses how to develop situation assessments as well as monitoring and evaluation tools. Section V, the *Conclusion*, presents a checklist of issues to consider when working with youth in crisis and emergencies.

II. THE ISSUES[1]

WHO ARE 'YOUTH'?

Definitions of 'youth' often vary according to culture. During a recent presentation about African youth, members of the audience, mostly mid-career humanitarian agency professionals, were asked to define youth. Those from North America and Europe spoke first, debating the appropriate age range. The ages mentioned were generally between 12-13 and 21-25. Those from Africa spoke next. They did not mention age in their definitions. Instead, they spoke of youth as a stage of social development between childhood and adulthood, a time of life stretching from puberty to the acceptance of the responsibilities of marriage and family.

The definition of 'youth' tends to be younger and narrower in Western concepts, while outside the West the definition can be broader and determined not by age but by stages of life. An illuminating example of this difference between Western and non-Western definitions of youth took place in the Kakuma refugee camps in northwestern Kenya. There, African personnel for Lutheran World Federation's youth program translated their African definition of youth into an age range. For that program, the youth population in the Kakuma camps was defined as everyone between ages 7 and 40. While this is a much broader definition than Save the Children adopts, it does help illustrate the difficulties program staff may have in defining the term.

For the purposes of this field guide, Save the Children's working definition of youth will be ***all people between the ages of 13 and 25***. However, this definition is recommended only as a starting point. Each program should define youth and determine its youth target population according to the cultural context in which it will operate. The age range may be revised upwards, downwards, or both according to how the community and youth themselves perceive the concept.

Another very important factor that can complicate the definition of 'youth' is gender. In many cultures, the social stage of being a youth is much longer for young males than young females. If, for example, a society defines the 'youth' as the period between childhood and marriage, it may be a very short period for girls who marry young. As an illustration of this, the term for woman in Swahili, *mwanamke*, translates literally as "child

[1]This field guide has benefited from the contributions of Betsy Mull, research assistant.

wife," while the term for adolescent, *mbalehe*, is derived from *kubalehe*, which translates either as "to reach puberty" and "to be ready for marriage." It can also be used to refer to bearing fruit. Its reference is usually to females who, through puberty, become women. This quick shift from being a girl to becoming a child wife makes youth a very short phase.

Because of this gender difference, adolescent girls and young women are too often left out of youth definitions and youth programs: female youths may be less visible, but specific efforts must be undertaken to ensure that their needs are considered in programming priorities. It is important for programmers to advocate for the inclusion of adolescent girls and young women — even young married women — in youth programming.

WHY TARGET YOUTH IN CRISIS?

The students of today, a common adage states, are the leaders of tomorrow. Most youth who are living through war and displacement, however, feel that this promise does not apply to them. Their present is frequently dangerous and desperate, and their future is uncertain. Many youth are orphaned or separated from their parents because of war, and they frequently assume the responsibilities of household head. Schooling is often not available to them, particularly females, and there may be few opportunities to learn skills or trades that could enhance their livelihood prospects. As a result, many youth endure economic and sexual exploitation to meet their (and their siblings') survival needs.

It is these out-of-school youth — the non-elite, less educated young people that are usually the overwhelming majority of youth in communities in crisis — that will be the focus of this field guide. They usually constitute a significant demographic segment of forced migrant populations and of other communities affected by armed conflict. They are also among the most troubled, and are almost sure to be the most alienated and disenfranchised.[2]

Youth are as entitled to the recognition and protection of their human rights as any other group. They comprise a valuable asset in any community, and the community will find it much more difficult to rehabilitate itself without the inclusion and participation of youth members. Unfortunately, there is a strong tendency in humanitarian settings to acknowledge that youth needs are important, and then do little about them. For affected communities and the agencies that serve them, youths are often difficult to reach and connect

[2]Many of these factors are covered in Lowicki, J. (2000). Untapped Potential: Adolescents Affected by Armed Conflict: A Review of Programs and Policies. New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, p. 5.

with. Young people on the cusp of social responsibility have somehow become, in terms of program development and donor support, mostly ignorable. Their problems may seem too complicated and taxing to address. However, failing to act may only exacerbate young people's problems and frustrations, aggravate a community's distress, and delay the community's recovery. To challenge some of these tendencies, this field guide will examine the particular challenges and needs confronting youth in crisis situations, review trends and themes in existing programming for this population, and present a selection of the relatively few youth program models that do exist.

One of the challenges to working with youth is that the age group covers adolescents, with clearly defined rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as young adults who do not benefit from any specific protections. More research has been conducted to date on the needs and concerns of adolescents as an important sub-group of youth. Borrowing from some of this literature, there are many reasons to consider adolescents — and by extension youth — when developing emergency programs. SC's Adolescent Development guide provides five key reasons to consider adolescents and their development more generally:[3]

- All adolescents have the right to life and full development.
- The period of adolescence is a critical phase in human development when patterns of interpersonal, social, and civic behavior are shaped and solidified.
- During periods of crisis, there is an increase in risk behaviors, which are symptoms of a serious shift in cultural patterns, altering the role of adolescence in the human life cycle and resulting in problems such as increased rates of adolescent pregnancy, HIV and STD infection, and youth crime.
- Thirty-five percent of the population in the developing world is under the age of 15, and in most sub-Saharan countries that population segment is already in the majority.
- Unprecedented rises in global famine, drought, ecological degradation and conflict mean that the adult years of today's adolescents will make or break the future of the planet.

Nothing excuses the failure of communities, governments and humanitarian actors to regularly and aggressively target youths for appropriate assistance and protection of their rights. Youths are an essential part of any community, even when the community does not consider their views or include them in the community. Action focused on a community's youth is an investment in the future development and security of the entire community.

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[3]Kline, P. and L. Herscovitch, L. Howard-Grabman, J. Dec and J. Banjade. (1998). Adolescent Development. Wilton, CT: Save the Children.

Youths are vital community members, and SC should work with communities to understand their situation and then actively support their rights and address their needs. In the short-term, SC and other agencies can work with communities and local government institutions to reach out to disaffected youth and provide immediate protection. In the medium-term, SC can work with community members, including youth, to develop appropriate programming to support their development and facilitate development of these programs with government authorities. And in the long-term, SC can help to ensure that youths are incorporated into rehabilitation and development planning at the local, national, and regional levels.

KEY CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH IN CRISIS

Youths face five main challenges in crisis situations:

- The need for acceptance and inclusion.
- The need for work.
- The risk of self-destructive tendencies.
- The risk of exploitation.
- The threat of HIV/AIDS and other STDs.

The difficulties that face youths in crisis situations are considerable, and in many respects specific to their age group. They may arrive in refugee or internally displaced person (IDP) camps with other members of their communities, but soon changes begin to occur. Military and political leaders may pressure young men to join their cause. Young women may be under heavy pressure to marry men who have lost their wives or seek another. The threat of rape may be considerable. Both young men and women may be thrust into the role of household head with the responsibility of providing for siblings and others at home while there are almost no opportunities for work.

The need for acceptance and inclusion

It is not unusual for people to be afraid of youths — especially male youths. Young men are often seen as threatening to society. This is one of the reasons that few programs are developed specifically for them. In many crisis situations, youths feel that they are being marginalized or simply overlooked by the community and by aid agencies. Graça Machel, in her landmark 1996 study on the impact of war on children, speaks of the virtual "invisibility" of adolescents in programming during emergency situations.

Feelings of exclusion may fuel youths' sense of despair and alienation, and may lead to desperate decisions such as joining gangs or militias, entering into prostitution, or marrying young and without the approval or acceptance of their families and communities. All of these actions pull youths away from family and community and make their social development into adulthood even more precipitous.

The awareness that something is going terribly wrong for a society's youth can be widespread and deeply felt in crisis situations. For example, mothers interviewed in Colombia and Mozambique spoke of their sons and daughters living "outside of society" after war broke out.[4] Once they have left society, it can be hard to pull them back in. To counter the trends toward the marginalization of youth, it is important to involve youth in all levels of decision-making that affect them and to work with youth rather than designing programs *for* them.

The need for work

Out-of-school youth, whether engulfed by crisis or not, tend to be involved in or in search for some sort of economic pursuit. Youth unemployment, in fact, is recognized as a serious worldwide problem, and the International Labor Organization (ILO) has devoted considerable attention to examining it. In 1995, the ILO found that slightly less than one fifth of the world's current population was between the ages of 15 and 24 (525 million young men, 500 million young women). Two-thirds of this population lived in countries where the per capita GDP was less than US $1,000 a year. These underdeveloped countries are also the sites of many of the world's conflicts, and the connection between youth unemployment and youth involvement in violence appears to be strong.[5]

This is a disturbing development, particularly when one considers the ILO's "three major reasons why unemployment while young, especially for frequent or long periods, can be particularly harmful":

- Youth unemployment can permanently impair a youth's future productive capacity.
- Youth unemployment can block young people in the passage from adolescence to adulthood, often leading to problems like single-parent households, drug abuse and crime.

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[4]Drawn from research for Myers, H.and M. Sommers. (1999). A Charade of Concern: The Abandonment of Colombia's Forcibly Displaced. New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

[5]International Labor Organization. (2000). Employing Youth: Promoting Employment-Intensive Growth. Report for the Interregional Symposium on Strategies to Combat Youth Unemployment and Marginalization, Dec. 13-14 1999, Geneva. Geneva: International Labor Organization.

- There is a connection between unemployment and alienation from society and from democratic political processes, which may give rise to social unrest.[6]

Recognizing that many, if not most, youths that aid agencies deal with in crises are already unemployed is an important part of understanding and assisting them. Lack of work not only makes it difficult for youth to support themselves and their families, but can also generate feelings of frustration and powerlessness, which can lead youths to act in ways that damage themselves and their communities.

The right to work is a fundamental human right, and work is precisely what most out-of-school youths have on their minds. Youths' right to work, however, is rarely addressed during crises, even though supporting work for youths through advocacy and programming may be the most practical way to address youths' economic, physical, and psychosocial needs.

The risk of self-destructive tendencies

Adolescence is a time when "the drive to experiment is coupled with a mixture of audacity and insecurity."[7] The combination of a "deep sense of loneliness and high degree of psychological vulnerability" are a volatile mixture and can become even more explosive when exposed to violent and traumatizing events.[8]

Working with youths during crises usually means working with deeply troubled youngsters. Two experts report that "a traumatized adolescent may exhibit such antisocial behaviors as truancy, sexual promiscuity and substance abuse," and use firearms, cars, drugs and other items that can facilitate their self-destruction.[9] In camps for refugees and internally displaced persons, it is not unusual to find youth (particularly male youths) who are drunk or drugged. They are often bored and depressed, and have few outlets for their frustrations and aspirations.

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[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Konopka, G. (2001). Requirements for Healthy Development of Adolescent Youth. www.cyfernet.org/youthdev/konopka.html.

[9]Arroyo, W. and S. Eth. (1996). *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Other Stress Reactions*. In Minefields in Their Hearts: The Mental Health of Children in War and Communal Violence, Roberta J. Apfel and Bennett Simon, eds. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, pp. 52-74.

Some youth may commit life-endangering acts beyond drug and alcohol abuse, including taking risks with weapons and other forms of physical violence. Some experts consider these acts "reenactment behavior," actions through which youths re-live the incidents that caused their flight and trauma. Thus, traumatizing events in a youth's past can continue to haunt her or him in ways that are destructive to others and to themselves.

The risk of exploitation

Almost all youth have a strong need for affiliation with and approval of a peer group. Most youth are in the process of experimenting to find out who they are and how they will begin their journey through life as adults. In crisis situations, there are usually adults seeking to provide youth with the answers they are searching for.

Some of these adults mean well. The contributions of nonviolent religious and political groups to youth lives should not be underestimated. Youth may join political groups in part because of the promise of securing a job if they do. They may join choirs and attend other church activities because of the social connections and the promises of spiritual healing.[10]

But other adults clearly do not mean well. Troubled, disorganized young people are easy to exploit. Conflict not only fuels alienation in young people but also provides destructive outlets for expressing this alienation. The perception that children and youth are easily manipulated and expendable commodities may lead to recruitment by armed forces — government armies, rebels, militias, mercenaries, criminal gangs, or other armed groups. Joining such a group may be very tempting to youth with little sense of control over their lives and hope for the future. Being part of a fighting force and having a weapon can radically change vulnerable youths' lives and self-perception.[11]

Perhaps no group has proven as expert at exploiting young people as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone. While the government and international agencies were paying little or no attention to Sierra Leonean youth problems and needs, the RUF pounced. Through a number of methods, the RUF tapped into strong and widespread feelings of social exclusion and alienation among Sierra Leonean out-of-school youth. One of their most effective means of recruiting and indoctrinating young people was showing the movie *Rambo: First Blood*, which told the story of the triumph of a misunderstood

[10] For more information, see Sommers, M. (1998). Reconciliation and Religion: Refugee Churches in the Rwandan Camps. Uppsala: Life and Peace Insititute.

[11]For further discussion of child soldier issues, please refer to the *Child Soldier Field Guide for Emergency Programming* by M. Lorey in this series.

underdog, and communicated the message that "someone young, clever and strong always has a chance to outsmart the well-armed but slow-witted opponent."[12] Many young people in Sierra Leone found the movie "enlightening" and considered it one of their favorite films.

The threat of HIV/AIDS and other STDs

Among the most significant dangers to youth in crisis situations are HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Many youth may be uninformed of the dangers of unsafe sex. Others may simply not care about avoiding disease, and may not seek treatment if they are infected. This may be particularly notable among male youth, who may be resistant to visiting a clinic for medical treatment or attending sessions on HIV/AIDS and other STDs. They may desire to avoid attention from community members who they feel do not like or trust them. They may also not want to know if they are infected with HIV or another STD because of the stigma attached to such a diagnosis.

For young women, wars dramatically expand the threat of rape and, as a result, the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other STDs. Men who have lost their wives in war may simply claim a young girl as their wife or household worker. The pressure on young girls to marry or engage in sexual activity increases in areas where the belief prevails that marrying a virgin will protect a man from contracting HIV. In addition, because young women are often hidden from public view, it can be difficult for outside groups to reach them with education and assist them with services. Often young women have the opportunity to access medical services only after they become pregnant.

RESILIENCE AND RESOURCEFULNESS

The picture painted by the host of challenges facing youth in crisis seems bleak. But it is important to recognize that youth are not simply helpless victims buffeted by external forces. Youths are also energetic and creative human beings, even in crisis situations. Young people worldwide have demonstrated remarkable resilience and resourcefulness when faced with the most difficult environments.

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[12]Richards, P. (1996). Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth & Resources in Sierra Leone. Oxford: James Currey, and Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, pp. 57-58. For more discussion of these issues, refer to the *Field Guide to Child Soldier Programs in Emergencies* by M. Lorey in this series.

A number of traits have been identified which characterize resilient youth during times of crisis. These include:

- The ability to attract and use adult support.
- A curiosity and intellectual agility.
- A conviction of one's right to survive.
- A vision of the possibility and desirability of the restoration of a civilized moral order.
- The need and ability to help others.[13]

Youth resiliency is also evident in the coping strategies young people devise in crisis situations. Observing Burundian refugee youth living in Tanzanian camps, Simon Turner noted that a significant number of young men used the suspension of social structures in the makeshift refugee community to "try to change things to their own advantage."[14] Turner identified three coping strategies that the successful refugees developed.

- They taught themselves not to be shy in voicing their opinions in community meetings or to foreign aid workers. Some of these young people became recognized street and village leaders.
- They became involved in politics. Political parties often attract youth followers by awarding them with jobs. In addition, a political party can replace boredom and laziness with a sense of purpose.
- They tried to secure a job with a humanitarian agency. During times of crisis, young men and women may get the opportunity to hold more important positions than they may have been able to do in their home country.[15]

Thus, even in very difficult circumstances, youths can gain experience and develop skills that will be useful later in life. The resilience and resourcefulness of youth can help young people survive a crisis; the coping capacities that they develop during the crisis can help them succeed in years to come.

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[13]Apfel, R.J., and B. Simon. (1996). *Introduction*. In Minefields in Their Hearts: The Mental Health of Children in War and Communal Violence, Roberta J. Apfel and Bennett Simon, eds. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, pp. 9-11.

[14]Turner, S. (1999). Angry Young men in Camps: Gender, Age and Class Relations Among Burundian Refugees in Tanzania. Geneva: UNHCR. New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 9, p. 8.

[15]Ibid., pp. 9-10, 12.

III. INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Working with youths presents a number of challenges of inclusion, as seen above. Equally difficult is defining an international legal framework for youth rights, as the population includes both children and young adults, with different legal instruments recognizing different rights. SC's definition of youth includes adolescents, who are older children, from the age of 13 through 17. But youths also include young adults. This means that the youth category crosses the internationally recognized threshold between childhood (below age 18) and adulthood (18 and older).

As a result, all youths are NOT covered by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC only applies to younger youths. At the same time, it also often means that older youths are overlooked when rights for adults are considered. Thus, because the youth category is a mixture of older children (adolescents) and young adults: ***there are no rights instruments that specifically recognize and protect youth rights***; there is currently ***no internationally recognized age range*** for youths; ***and statistics about youths are rare*** and inconsistent in referring to people of different ages.

Because the youth category bridges international definitions of child and adult, there are also relatively few international guidelines and instruments that specifically address their concerns. The International Labor Organization is another of the few international agencies that addresses the concerns of both adolescents and young adults, because it focuses on working people of all ages. Appendix 3 includes a selection of ILO employment-related instruments which include youth concerns and important international human rights instruments covering the entire youth category. These documents may provide useful guidance, especially in youth programs which address work or training schemes.

IV. PROGRAMMING GUIDANCE

SAVE THE CHILDREN'S PRINCIPLES IN YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Save the Children Federation has developed six principles to guide and strengthen its programs worldwide. This section discusses the application of these principles youth programming.

1. *Child-centeredness.* SC is committed to protecting and fulfilling the rights of all children. Youth, which includes older children, are included in SC's mission. In many cases, youths' needs are overlooked; SC works towards ensuring that their rights are known and their specific needs are taken into account in post-conflict settings. SC takes a holistic approach to child and youth development, promoting the psychosocial well-being of all children as well as addressing their physical and material needs.

2. *Gender equity.* SC is committed to ensuring that its programs recognize and respond to the gender-specific vulnerabilities and strengths of female and male youth. SC seeks to maximize the involvement of females and males through gender-sensitive training, equitable hiring of male and female facilitators, and the use of gender analysis when designing community-based youth programming.

3. *Empowerment.* At the level of the individual, SC is committed to ensuring the participation of all youth in decisions and actions that affect them in a manner appropriate to their age and maturity. At the program level, SC is committed to facilitating action to assist youth that is community-based and community-led, enabling local people and organizations to work with youth to meet their needs.

4. *Sustainability.* Because SC is committed to ensuring that local organizations are able to respond to future challenges affecting youth, SC works to strengthen the capacity of partner communities and other organizations (including local NGOs and governments) to assist them. SC seeks to enhance productive linkages between youth and government institutions, as well as balance emergency response with assistance for transitional periods and the long term.

5. *Scaling up.* SC is committed to reaching as many youth as possible while maintaining a high level of quality in its programs.

6. *Measurable impact.* SC is committed to ensuring that its programs have substantial positive effects on the lives of youth. Thus all SC youth programs should have clear objectives and should report accurately and meaningfully on program activities and outcomes.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING DURING CRISIS SITUATIONS: LESSONS LEARNED

What makes a youth program work in situations of war and crisis? This section summarizes key issues to consider in developing a youth program and the lessons learned by Save the Children as well as partner agencies that have implemented programs for youth in crisis situations. See Box 4.1 for an example describing the process of initiating a youth program.

- **War and other crises complicate the coming-of-age issues that all youths face, making youths' lives even more stressful and perplexing than they ordinarily would be.** As a result, the lives of youths in crisis are often chaotic and subject to abrupt changes in direction. Not only are youths developing their own identity as individuals and as members of a community, but they are surrounded by instability, violence, and death. In addition, youths in crisis situations often have few positive role models.

- **Feelings of alienation and exclusion in youths' lives run strong and deep.** Youth programming that focuses on secondary schooling will only be available to a small number of youths in most situations. This will make out-of-school youths who cannot attend school feel even more alienated and excluded. It will also make them much harder to reach. Therefore, it is essential for youth programming to emphasize connection to communities and the inclusion of youth.

- **Youth programs tend to attract far more adolescent boys and young men than adolescent girls and young women.** Female youths' lives are usually much more private and hidden than those of their male counterparts. Female youth often cannot

[4]Armed non-governmental groups may also engage in these practices.

participate in programming activities because of their many domestic obligations. In addition, girls and young women may have real and appropriate fears for their safety and protection. Sincere efforts to gain their trust and determined, respectful efforts to accommodate possible constraints on their movements and availability may be required to involve female youth in the program.

- **Youths will seek work whether it is legal or not**. They tend to be highly entrepreneurial, especially male youths in most societies. In their own way, most youths are constantly making market assessments and exploring ways to make money. The need for work is often not addressed in youth programming. This is particularly true for refugee communities, and it often leads youths towards illegal work, crime, or involvement in armed forces.[16]

- **Youth programs are community programs.** Youth programming must be holistic, responsive, and participatory. Youth programming should be inviting to young people who consider themselves outcasts, misfits, and failures and should foster reconciliation with other community members who uninterested in or afraid of youth.

- **In every crisis situation, attempts at reaching youth are being made.** In many contexts, militias and gangs are recruiting and preying on young people. Religious groups may also be working with youths. Unfortunately, aid agency officials are often resistant to working or coordinating activities with religious groups, although these groups may be the only ones effectively engaging with young people in positive ways and actively involving them within their communities. Building partnerships is essential within the community, and effective partners should not be excluded out of hand.

- **Expect to fail before getting it right.** Without regular program monitoring and evaluation, it is hard to know how — or if — a program is addressing the needs of a population as unpredictable as out-of-school, marginalized youths in crisis situations. Youth are not a homogeneous group, and even the most well-designed program will not reach all young people. Continuing efforts should be made to assess and evaluate program participation, process, and outcomes.

- **Working with youths in crisis situations requires patience and commitment.** It is not the sort of work for the hesitant or the impatient. Youths engulfed by crisis are difficult and challenging to deal with because their lives are.

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[16]For more discussion of these issues, refer to the *Field Guide to Child Soldier Programs in Emergencies* by M. Lorey in this series.

BOX 4.1: LESSONS FROM THE RWANDAN REFUGEE CAMPS

In August 1994, four months after the Rwandan refugee camps had been established in Tanzania and slightly more than a month after the end of the genocide in Rwanda, aid agencies held a joint meeting in Ngara. The officials discussed how the problems in the refugee camps were beginning to resemble those of large cities, given the sheer size and concentration of the refugee population — the largest camp, Benaco, hosted 250,000 people on one hill — and the problems the refugees presented. Concerns over sanitation, water, and health were discussed, in addition to crime. The discussion of criminal activities covered a number of issues, including worries about the spread of AIDS due to rape and increased sexual activity among the youth, gang fights, and militia trainings at night. There was also the problem of discovering dead bodies in the camps every morning in latrines and unmarked graves.

At that point, one official spoke out: There were no programs for the youth! Primary schools, community centers and other activities were in the works, but there was nothing targeting Rwandan youths. The conversation to that point had largely focused on their activities (rape and other kinds of violence involving youths), but positive alternatives had not been established. In reality, research later revealed, there were youth activities going on, most of them sponsored by refugee mosques and churches. But their work was disconnected from the work of the international humanitarian agencies. By the end of the meeting, it was decided that youth activities of some sort had to begin. Soon thereafter, soccer balls were purchased, and competitions between teams of male refugee youth began.

Today, more programming is being implemented for refugee and displaced youth. But other tendencies arising from the Ngara example still persist. Youths are still imperiled by violence, and religious group activities for youth usually take place separately from those started by humanitarian agencies. And a common first step for youth programming during the early emergency phases is still to roll out soccer balls.

INSIGHTS FROM PROGRAMMING FOR U.S. YOUTH IN CRISIS

Unfortunately, relatively few evaluations of programming for at-risk youth in emergency and chronic crisis have been undertaken in the field. Work in this area is increasing, but the lack of well-documented learning can weaken program design and make it difficult to identify 'good practices' in youth programming. On the other hand, some programs for at-risk youth in the United States — including work that SC has done in its domestic programs — have been documented and evaluated, producing important lessons for designers of youth programming in other regions of the world. Although the context differs in some respects, at-risk U.S. youth and youth in crisis situations elsewhere in the world often face common problems, including violence, sexual abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment, and distrust and ostracism by older adults. Three different studies are presented here, and program designers may be interested in further reading suggested in the bibliography.

Committed, capable staff is an important step in successful implementation. "When young people are asked what it is that makes a good program work, they invariably cite the quality of relationships with staff…[They] need staff who understand what their lives are like — that is, they want at least some staff to live in their neighborhoods and to know and appreciate their brand of youth culture."[17] Establishing trust between youth and staff, building a strong relationship of common understanding, can lead to youth feeling less cynical about their lives and new programs. Once trust is established, however, youths become the best promoters of successful programs.

Program design must focus on the individual needs and resources of youth. Youth programs need to shift their focus "away from intervention to interaction, away from programs to people, and away from content to context." Youth respond best when given participatory roles, when trusted, and when they perceive they are valued members of society and communities. They require "opportunities to contribute to the community" and choices of how to participate. Youths, in sum, are searching for "nurturance, respect, and opportunities to develop skills and responsibility."[18]

Youth programs should take an integrated approach to addressing the broader developmental assets of all children and youth. "Youth programs need to avoid "deficit-based approaches that focus solely on youth problems" and attempt to "stop young people from engaging in risky behaviors." The U.S. National Youth Development Center (NYDIC) has found in its broad study that the negative focus on preventing bad things from happening doesn't work with youths; instead, more positive approaches such as "caring relationships, safe places, physical and mental health, skills building, and opportunities for service and civic participation" are much more successful in having a positive impact in youths' lives.[19]

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[17]Greene, Michael B. (1996). *Youth and Violence: Trends, Principles, and Programmatic Interventions*. In Minefields in Their Hearts: The Mental Health of Children in War and Communal Violence. Roberta J. Apfel and Bennett Simon, eds. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, pp.140, 143.

18Pittman, K.J. and S. Zeldin. (1994). From Deterrence to Development: Shifting the Focus of Youth Programs for African-American Males. In Nurturing Young Black Males: Challenges to Agencies, Programs, and Social Policy, Ronald B. Mincy, ed. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, pp. 48-49.

[19]National Youth Development Information Center (NYDIC). (2001). Definitions. Youth Development (and Related Terms). www.nydic.org./devdef.html, p3, YW10.

The NYDIC identified three central characteristics for youth programming:[20]

- **youth-centered:** staff and activities engage young people's diverse talents, skills, and interest, building on their strengths and involving them in planning and decision-making;
- **knowledge-centered:** building a range of life skills…and providing opportunities to connect with a wide array of peer mentors;
- **care-centered:** providing family-like environments where youth can feel safe and build trusting relationships.

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Although the number of programs for youths in crisis remains small, the range of programming options is as broad as the issues of concern to any youth population. Programs tend to emphasize three main components: *non-formal education, vocational education, and community participation*. There is nearly always some aspect of each component in a successful youth program, but the mix depends largely upon the target population, their specific needs and assets, and the community's perception of youth. The mix is also likely to change over time as some interests become more dominant than others. Examples of all three program types are presented briefly here to help program staff work through their own ideas of what can be developed in their own context to meet the needs of youths in crisis.[21]

Non-formal Education

Non-formal education programs may cover a wide variety of areas, ranging from basic literacy and numeracy, survival education, life skills, and peace building approaches. Non-formal education is defined by its flexible approach to education and its use of approaches which lie outside of a formal education setting.[22] The content may be identical to that offered in the formal system, as in literacy programs for older students and early school-leavers, or it may be entirely different and respond to specific needs of youth in their community.

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[20]Ibid.

[21]Additional information about these models is listed in the bibliography, and documents are on file with the SC Children in Crisis Unit.

[22]For more discussion of formal education programs, please refer to the *Field Guide to Education Programs in Emergencies* by C. Triplehorn in this series.

Norwegian Refugee Council: Youth Literacy Package, Rwanda

In Rwanda, the Norwegian Refugee Council, with input from UNESCO-PEER and AED, developed a Youth Literacy Package for youth remaining in Rwanda and those who were refugees in neighboring countries. The program focused on teaching basic literacy, numeracy and life skills to youths ages 13-30 and targeted refugee and displaced youth, youths living on the streets, and youths living in communities where the program's literacy centers were to be located.

The model was envisioned as a one-year, classroom-based, half-day non-formal educational program for out-of-school youths. The program intended to offer lessons that were appropriate and relevant to the lives and situation of the youth. Topics to be covered in addition to literacy and numeracy included civic education, peace education, money management, poultry raising, housekeeping, cooking, nutrition, environmental health, childrearing, first-aid, and health, including HIV/AIDS. Class size was intended to be between 25-30 to allow individualized attention to learners.

The initial phase of the project focused on training teachers in interactive instruction methodologies using a two-week intensive training program, and on generating learning resources. Resources developed included a literacy and numeracy text, teaching guides, and calendars.

The program was ambitious, seeking to teach out-of-school youths a wide range of skills in a single year, but this kind of holistic educational approach has strong potential. If youth needs and interests are assessed properly, and the challenges of teacher recruitment, support and training are addressed, such a program may be able to attract a large number of youth who could be educated about issues important for their survival and development.

Program designers interested in adapting this model may consider simplifying the curriculum, intensifying teacher training, enhancing youth participation and evaluation, examining how best to reach those most in need of the training (such as poor female youth), and developing complementary programs that could support job training and/or micro-loans for graduates.

All Africa Conference of Churches: Peace training, Kenya

Although peace education of some sort is a component of most youth programming carried out by religious groups, they are rarely as comprehensive as the All Africa Conference of Churches manual which focuses on youth.[23] The program opens, not surprisingly, with a Christian theological perspective on peace and states its intent to build a culture of peace, in part through interfaith dialogue and cooperation. But the training manual quickly branches out to cover more traditional peace education concepts, such as communication and understanding the perspectives of parties on both sides of a conflict.

Nonetheless, the emphasis on faith as the foundation for resolving conflict and building stable peace highlights how religious groups try to connect with out-of-school youth and provide them with programming that might interest them. The expertise of local religious groups in effectively reaching youth with programs is too often overlooked or ignored by international organizations. The failure to recognize, learn from, and coordinate and/or work with religious group efforts is a major weakness in humanitarian emergency efforts, particularly those concerning youth in crisis.

Vocational Training

Vocational training addresses a central youth concern — work — but can be difficult to implement effectively. These programs usually reach only a small proportion of the youth population, can be costly, and may not prepare youths for sustainable careers. Careful consideration should be given to the objectives of the program: learning new skills may open the door to new opportunities and increased psychosocial well-being, but if income generation is the principal objective then careful analysis of the local economy must also accompany the program design.

Don Bosco Homes: Vocational programs, Liberia

In three post-war towns, 479 trainees (44 percent female) were taught skills such as sewing, agriculture, masonry, rattan craft, carpentry, pastry making and soap making. Other program components were classes for literacy and numeracy, together with reunification of separated children with their families and community reintegration. The staff

[23]All Africa Conference of Churches. (1999). Youth Peace Training Manual. Nairobi: All Africa Council of Churches.

estimated that 87 percent of graduates were in "gainful employment," 10 percent were receiving additional training, and only three percent were unemployed.[24]

Street Kids International: Youth Skills Enterprise Initiative, Lusaka, Zambia

While youths in crisis situations are often very interested in securing capital to start or expand micro-enterprises, few micro-credit programs have been developed targeting youths in crisis. Most micro-finance institutions prefer somewhat older clients with more business experience and tend to view young people in unstable situations as poor credit risks. The Youth Skills Enterprise Initiative in Zambia, operated by Street Kids International, provides street and working youths in Lusaka with the chance to learn business and life skills and access credit. The participants must be between ages 14 and 22, must be out of school but cannot have completed grade 9, and must be living in "sub-standard conditions." In addition, they must be referred to the program as youths "who are motivated to create positive change in their life." Once in the program, youths must complete their training and develop a business plan before qualifying for a loan "in the form of assets they will need to start their business."[25]

Access to resources and capital is a primary concern of many youth, particularly those who are trying to start their own business and build for their future. Credit-based programs can further provide youths the opportunity to work together on initiatives and connect to other community members. Unfortunately, micro-credit programming is exceedingly rare in crisis situations, and even more so for youths. This potential programming area should be further explored as it can provide important support to youth and their communities.

UNHCR: Apprenticeships and training, Tanzania refugee camps

Due to the ongoing civil conflict in Burundi, some 350,000 Burundians have sought refuge in Tanzania. 100,000 refugees, or 29 percent of the total population, are youth. Each year another 10,000 youth enter the refugee camp. Given the increasing youth population, there were increasing concerns that idleness could turn to delinquency. In response, NGOs surveyed refugees to determine specific needs and suggestions for activities.[26] Few options were available for out-of-school youth and school-leavers.

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[24]Williamson, J. and L. Feinberg, (July 1999). Liberia's WAYS Project Assessment. Washington, DC: USAID/ Displaced Children and Orphans Fund and War Victims Fund/ Professional Resources Group International, Inc.

[25]Street Kids International, www.streetkids.org.

[26]Lyby, E. (March 2001). Vocational Training for Refugees: A Case Study from Tanzania. Washington, DC: UNHCR.

Both refugees and NGOs identified the need for training for youths that would provide meaningful skills and meet market demands in Burundi. Local craftsmen were consulted concerning appropriate interventions and suggested needs for repatriation.

Vocational training was delivered in three ways:

- institution-based training, through vocational training schools providing instruction on specific professions
- group-based training, through youths working on cooperative projects in peer groups
- enterprise-based training, through apprenticeships with respected craftsmen and women

Evaluation of the program suggests that a combination of the three methods may be best, combining a variety of social interaction with the learning process. The model has proven to be practical and responsive to the needs and interests of Burundian refugee youth through consultations and participation. The market orientation of the training programs and the degree of coordination among local agencies and the Burundian government also indicates that there is strong support which will be necessary to lead to a sustainable program. Based on the market analysis and consultations with tradespeople, it should also be possible for youth trainees to apply the skills they gain in Burundian markets following repatriation.

This model also suggests areas for further consideration in planning similar programs:

- Success of individual youths depends largely on their drive to become a successful business person.
- The program must be responsive to the local market and evolve as the market changes over time.
- Despite efforts to reach female youth, the training remains targeted primarily at male youths. The model is focused primarily on those youth with clear entrepreneurial skills. Not surprisingly, this group consists largely of educated young men.
- Youth must be highly involved in program coordination and decision-making structures. Because the training costs are rather steep, the program can only reach a small number of youths.
- Because the cost of the program is fairly high, it is possible for only a limited number of youth to participate. Care must be taken to ensure equitable access and reduce resentment among those who may not be able to participate during a given course. If participation is limited to the educated youth in a camp, those who are most in need of support and skills may be unintentionally excluded.

Community Participation

Save the Children: Child and Youth Development Program (CYDP), E. Timor

To respond to the needs of disaffected and disenfranchised youth in East Timor, Save the Children partnered with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) to develop community-based youth resource centers.[27] Support was provided to the youth centers through training, materials, and small seed grants. With 80 percent of all buildings destroyed in the 1999 violence, the program also supported rehabilitation of buildings on public property for use as youth clubs and community centers. Drawing from the community's experiences, members of the community served on a committee to represent the welfare of youth and children, planning and managing the centers by generating income for upkeep and activities.

SC trained community volunteers in community mobilization and trained youth volunteers in working with the committee as well as designing activities for children, adolescents, and youth. Once the centers were renovated, the youth centers also provided small seed grants to local groups for a variety of activities: football tournaments, a carpentry workshop, a youth center coffee shop, and the celebration of Human Rights Day.

The involvement of the local community and local NGOs was important in moving forward in meeting youth needs as well as providing a voice for youth who felt disaffected in the post-independence political transition process. The opportunity for community organizations to apply for funding has enhanced meaningful participation at all levels, as the youth center committee makes final decisions on how funds will be allocated.

Within this program, it became clear that the model may be useful and replicated with an emphasis on participation at all levels. Even with the CYDP structure, youth were still struggling for stronger involvement in some cases. A variety of approaches should be included in the design, as some youth found that working with younger children and older adults had a positive impact on their community involvement, while others wanted further access to resources to design their own projects and skills training activities. In this kind of program model, the small grant concept could also be expanded to not only build social cohesion but also increase youth leadership.

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[27]Save the Children. (January, February, March 2001). Quarterly Report — Central Districts. Child and Youth Development Program (CYDP) Save the Children Federation/US Dili, East Timor.

The innovative multi-partner model in this project also highlights that defining shared objectives and approaches allows for broader programming and geographic reach, as well as more significant outcomes in a short period of time.

WOMEN'S COMMISSION: YOUTH CENTERS AND PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH, KOSOVO

The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children conducted an assessment of the protection and assistance needs of youth in Kosovo.[28] The research was carried out together with 24 Kosovar youths and 7 adult research advisors. The youth researchers had little or no research experience but enjoyed learning a new skill. They were "also happy simply to have something to do." In comparison to most crisis and post-war situations, youth programming in Kosovo is extensive and well funded. The Women's Commission estimates that there are at least 280 youth organizations and clubs, which form the core of the youth effort. These associations do not, in general, focus on job or skills training, but rather on recreation, information sharing, public service and awareness campaigns. Some are political in nature, while others are designed to get youth involved in government and community discussions that impact their lives. Although not focusing on skills, this project documents the positive impact that can result from making youth activities participatory and awarding youths with important responsibilities.

RECREATION KITS

UNESCO has developed a kit to initiate recreational activities early in the emergency phase for young children and adolescents, the "Recreate" kit.[29] It is designed to facilitate the first stage of programming by providing supplies for semi-structured recreational activities. The kit contains 30 items: volleyballs, soccer balls, skipping ropes, dance costumes, and music instruments for the children and youth, and a guide for teachers. The essential purpose of these kits is to organize children and youth in school-like settings and promote "expression and play", which can be fundamental in building resilience in children who have been affected by armed conflict."[30]

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[28]Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, Mission to Albania and Kosovo. (January 2001). Making the Choice for a Better Life: Promoting the Protection and Capacity of Kosovo's Youth. New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

[29]For further discussion and examples of education kits, please refer to the *Field Guide to Education Programs in Emergencies* by C. Triplehorn in this series.

[30]Aguilar, P. and G. Retamal. (1998). Educational Response in Complex Emergencies: A Discussion Document. Geneva: International Bureau of Education, pp. 11, 13, 15.

Among the chief advantages of the recreation kit is that it can rapidly jumpstart a youth program. Though most kits to date have been primarily targeted at younger children, the kit concept can be adapted to youth needs. The recreation activities hold the promise of helping to take youths' minds off the trauma of war and flight and helping reintroduce them to a structured, stable environment.

However, quick programming based on kits is a component of emergency response that remains debated. Critics contend that education kits are centered on materials instead of people and on teaching aids instead of teachers. Also, there are often delays in transporting kits to emergency sites. If transport to camps is in short supply, food delivery will be prioritized over delivery of kits. Other criticisms are rooted in issues of culture and adaptability. Some program designers argue that kit-based recreation activities fail to identify and encourage local traditions in music, folklore, drama, and art. Recognizing and reviving these traditional customs and norms constitutes an important form of psychosocial support, but can be ignored in a purely kit-based program.

The most significant weaknesses of recreation initiatives are related to their potential for excluding youths. Youths who are not athletic, are preoccupied with other activities, or are disabled may not be able to participate. In addition, recreation programs tend to attract more male youths than females. Programmers should work with youth to design recreation activities that are as inclusive as possible. Recreation initiatives that exclude significant proportions of the youth population only serve to exacerbate youths' feelings of insecurity and alienation.

Other complications can also arise in the use of these kits and in the design of recreation activities in general. Sports generally lead to team competitions, but these are not handled correctly and balanced with other activities, they have the potential to become reenactments of existing rivalries between youths. Such competitions may even strengthen the group identities that fueled the outbreak of war.

Many youth program developers suggest that recreation kits can be useful but should not be the only basis on which recreation programs are designed. It is preferable to enable youths to organize themselves and prioritize their own activities, then support and assist in guiding the initiatives the youths design, using materials from recreation kits and other sources.

OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPING PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH IN CRISIS

Program designers may face a number of obstacles as they work to develop initiatives targeting youth in crisis, but lessons have been learned. None of these obstacles is insurmountable. However, it is important to be aware of and prepared for them.

- **Limited funding for youth programming.** Funding for youth in crisis situations is, at best, unsteady. Typically, donor support for these programs occurs on an *ad hoc* basis only. In addition, today "donor agencies are asking major international organizations to economize — to assist more war victims and refugees with fewer resources."[31] Thus there are fewer funds available overall. If SC and its partners in crisis situations do not make a concerted effort to advocate and secure support for youth programming, youths may be overlooked entirely.

- **Short-term nature of most crisis funding.** Much funding in crisis situations is "emergency" funding available for a maximum of one year. Programs are often unable to effectively address the many and complex needs of youth in crisis in a single year. If the crisis itself is likely to last longer than a year, youth program designers and managers should begin seeking funds to sustain successful programs as soon as possible after gaining initial funding so that there will not be an interruption or cessation of the program.

- **Youth programs can be costly**. Holistic, community-based approaches to youth needs are usually the most effective but may also be the most expensive. Youths will nearly always want skills and vocational training to prepare for their future: these are often some of the most costly programs to start and maintain in crisis situations.

- **'Youth' includes both children and young adults.** The youth category incorporates adolescents, who are technically children, and older youths, who are technically adults, according to international definitions. Funds may be more readily available for adolescents than for young adults and it may be difficult to find funding for a program that targets all youths.

[31]Boothby, N. (1996). *Mobilizing Communities to Meet the Psychological Needs of Children in War and Refugee Crises*. In Minefields in Their Hearts: The Mental Health of Children in War and Communal Violence, Roberta J. Apfel and Bennett Simon, eds. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, p. 151.

- **Work may be restricted.** Youths want to work. But work opportunities for forced migrant youth are usually limited. Youths are often seeking to start businesses of their own, even if they are small. Programs offering small loans to youths may be of great interest to young people, but so far such programs have proven difficult to get funding for.

- **Resistance to supporting youth.** Although youth needs are well known, many donors prefer to support youth programs in post-war environments when there is some improvement in security, not during crisis situations. In refugee and IDP situations, government authorities may oppose youth programs because they fear that assisting displaced youths will delay their return home, flood local markets with workers, undermine local economies, or challenge political security.

SITUATION ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

One of the central problems facing many youths in crisis is that others misunderstand and distrust them. Even well intentioned agencies often assume that they know what youths in crisis want and need. If they fail to listen and respond to youths' input, programs are unlikely to succeed and may even cause harm. Therefore, youth program designers and managers should involve youth in every step of the program development process: assessing the situation, defining program objectives, designing program activities, monitoring implementation, and evaluating results.

Every youth program should, in its essence, be a learning program. It should be designed to adjust to changes in youths' circumstances and needs. It should also be flexible enough to adapt to new information that programmers learn about youths and that youths discover about themselves. Young people in crisis situations often do not think much of themselves, and may have a very limited sense of their own potential. Youth programs need to be able to evolve as youths themselves grow and as the wider context changes.

Assessing the situation of youths in crisis

The first step in the process of designing a program should be an assessment of the situation of youths in the crisis. Using participatory methodologies, program designers should examine the major challenges, problems, and needs facing youth. The issues that should be explored include:

- *Health:* inadequate nutrition, basic health needs, vulnerability to HIV and other STDs.
- *Safety and security:* issues of sexual violence, ethnic rivalry, crime, attempted recruitment by armed forces.
- *Psychosocial:* coping with loss, grief, and anxiety.
- *Educational:* needs for schooling, training, and other forms of education and the facilities and personnel to provide them.
- *Economic:* difficulties earning a livelihood, lack of capital and materials.

However, a situation assessment should not be solely a needs assessment. Asking only about youths' problems and weaknesses can be disempowering to youths, harming their self-esteem and sense of efficacy. Program designers conducting assessments should also explore youths' strengths and capacities — both those that they acknowledge, and those that they do not recognize but are evident in their actions.

As discussed earlier, youths in crisis situations can be remarkably resilient, creative, entrepreneurial, and courageous. They may have already begun activities that are helping them to cope with the challenges they face: small informal sector enterprises, sports and games, loosely organized clubs, and many other initiatives. These capacities and activities are vital assets and should form the basis on which programs are built. Program designers should affirm youths' strengths and develop programming that reinforces and expands them.

Methods that program designers can use to access youths' ideas and interests include: focus group discussions, individual semi-structured interviews, and various participatory appraisal exercises, including mapping exercises (such as maps of youths' daily routines, social networks, decision-making and authority flow/relationships within the community or camp, etc.). A caution to participatory appraisal is that the voices of a few confident or privileged youths sometimes dominate an assessment. These voices may not reflect the perspectives of the majority of youth. It is essential to find ways to listen to marginalized youth as well. Marginalized youth may include girls and young women; disabled youth;

and youth of ethnic, religious, or racial minorities. It may be necessary to organize separate focus groups and other assessment exercises involving only members of these groups in order to gain their perspectives.

Monitoring and evaluation of youth programs[32]

Evaluating the outcomes of youth programming in crisis situations is vital. The success of the program cannot be reliably assessed without rigorous examination of the program's results. In addition to evaluating programs, however, it is also necessary to monitor and document the process of implementation to understand the results achieved and how the program might be replicated elsewhere.

Although there are numerous guides to program monitoring and evaluation, few address programming for children and youth in crisis. Thus, SC youth programs will need to develop innovative strategies for monitoring and evaluation, documenting both successful and unsuccessful attempts at tracking progress toward objectives and measuring the impacts of programs in youths' lives.

A key element of many program interventions for youth is empowerment: providing youth with a sense of their value, self-worth, competency, and decision-making ability. If youth are left out of the process of evaluating the implementation and outcome of programs that have an impact on their lives, attempts to empower youth may be overshadowed or undermined by the very activities that are meant to empower them. On the other hand, if youth are given specific tasks in monitoring a program's implementation and progress toward a goal, as well as an opportunity to share their observations periodically with program staff, both the program and the youth involved will benefit.

Youth programs are ultimately intended to make a positive difference in the lives of youth. The best judges of whether positive change has been made are youth themselves. During the program design process, youth should be involved in defining the program's objectives and identifying outcome indicators: indicators that measure progress toward achievement of these objectives. During program evaluation, youths should be closely engaged in both the data collection and analysis processes. As with situation assessment, it is vital that program staff actively seek out and listen to the voices of all youth, not just a vocal or privileged few. Indeed, the program's inclusivity/exclusivity should be one of the main criteria on which it is evaluated.

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[32]Dr. Laura Arntson, Monitoring, Evaluation and Training Specialist with the Children in Crisis Unit of Save the Children, is the primary author of this section.

However, most evaluations should also draw on the insights of others in the community. Evaluation should not be limited solely to those indicators that youth have identified, and information on indicators should be gathered from several sources. This approach, referred to as *triangulation*, serves as a quality control mechanism by gathering the same data from three or more different groups (e.g. youths, parents or other community members, and program implementers, etc.) or by using three or more different methods (e.g. interviews, records, and observations, etc.).

Due to the variety of programs for youth in crisis situations, the diversity of contexts in which they are implemented, and the scarcity of information about the monitoring and evaluation approaches that they use, this field guide does not propose a list of indicators or present specific tools in this edition. However, it is expected that a future edition will continue to build on program experience and provide indicators and tools drawn from programs now being developed and documented.

V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this field guide is to help prepare Save the Children staff to develop programs for youths in emergency and chronic crisis situations. Developing a successful youth program is not easy. In most crisis situations, there are large numbers of young people who need to be helped, and they face a host of complex challenges. While youths' needs are great, in most cases funds to assist youths are limited. Below is a summary of key issues to keep in mind when designing and managing programs that are holistic, flexible, participatory, empowering, and responsive to youths' needs, strengths, and interests.

- **The most important thing to remember in developing programs is to make a sincere attempt to reach youths.** Program staff should be reliable, patient, persistent, interested in, and inclusive of all youths.

- **A primary danger of starting a youth program lies in reaching only a small number of youths.** This may have the unintended result of reinforcing exclusion for those who are not in the program, many of whom probably already feel excluded. Youth programs that are available to small numbers of youths thus may make other youths harder to reach and potentially more dangerous to themselves and to others.

- **Female youths are harder to reach and include in programming than male youths.** Girls and young women are typically busy with domestic work, while boys and young men are more mobile. Few youth programs have taken into account the need for girls in many contexts to stay mostly at home. Too often, out-of-school female youths are reached only if they visit a clinic.

- **Male and female youths' interest in work must be addressed.** Vocational education, apprenticeships, business and life skills education, and micro-credit are all methods for achieving this goal.

- **HIV/AIDS and STD education and outreach must be a component of all youth programs where the disease is prevalent.** The danger that AIDS presents to youth is far too great to be ignored. Youth program developers should incorporate HIV prevention activities in all programming, drawing on the excellent resources and expertise in HIV/AIDS and STD control programming that are available from SC and other partners.

- **Youth programs carried out by international agencies are rarely the only initiatives, including those run by religious and other community groups, seeking to involve youth in crisis situations.** New youth programs should be carried out in coordination with existing positive initiatives and should seek to counteract outreach to youths by armed forces or other groups with dangerous intentions.

- **Youth programs that are not regularly monitored and evaluated using participatory methods will not succeed in reaching goals that youths want to achieve.** It is essential to track the development of each youth program over time through regular, effective, and participatory monitoring and evaluation, and to refine programs as necessary in response to findings. Using youths as evaluators is a proven method for gauging program effectiveness and enhancing youth self-esteem and capacity for responsibility.

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APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT WEBSITES

UNHCR: www.unhcr.ch with links to Action for Rights of Children (ARC) resources produced by the International Save the Children Alliance and UNHCR.

Educational Development Corporation: www2.edc.org

International Labor Organization: www.ilo.org

National Youth Employment Coalition: www.nyec.org.

Harvard School of Public Health Center for Health Communication: www.hsph.harvard.edu.

Building Blocks for Youth: www.buildingblocksforyouth.org

Education Week: www.edweek.org

Gisela Konopka, D.S.W. "Requirements for Healthy Development of Adolescent Youth," at www.cyfernet.org/youthdev/konopka.html.

Denver Workforce Center: www.moet.org.

National Youth Development Information Center: www.nydic.org.

International Youth Foundation: www.iyfnet.org

The Forum for Youth Investment: www.forumforyouthinvestment.org

Croatian Red Cross Youth: www.hck.hr

Resiliency in Action: www.resiliency.com

Academy for Educational Development: www.aed.org

Office of Justice Programs: www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org

International Labor Organization: www.ilolex.ilo.ch

Relief Web: www.reliefweb.int

Street Kids International: www.streetkids.org

National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship: www.nfte.com

Youth Media Producers Unite: www.pbs.org

Creative Connections: www.creativeconnections.org

Changemakers Library, Tools for Social Change: www.changemakers.net

Co/Motion: A Program for Alliance for Justice: www.comotionmakers.org

Latin American Youth Center: www.layc-dc.org

Urban Youth, Community Based Workshops: www.urbanyouth.org

Health Risk Factors for Adolescents: www.education.indiana.edu

Inter-American Development Bank: www.iadb.org

World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts: www.waggsworld.org

Trickle Up Program, Inc.: www.trickleup.org

UNICEF: www.unicef.org

APPENDIX 3: ILO REFERENCE INSTRUMENTS

There are only a limited number of international legal instruments which cover adolescents and young adults as 'youth'. The following instruments from the International Labor Organization are among these and may provide further specific guidance in youth programs which address work or training schemes.

The documents may be found at the ILO's website www.ilo.org.

- Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999
- Human Resources Development Convention, 1975
- [a] Minimum Age Convention, 1973
- Special Youth Schemes Recommendation, 1970
- Employment Policy Convention, 1964
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958
- Abolition of Forced Labor Convention, 1957
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
- Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948
- Night Work of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946
- Forced Labor Convention, 1930