

PROTECTING EDUCATION IN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY CONFLICT

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BOOKLET 8

Advocacy

Global
Education Cluster

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Front cover

A girl in Colombia holds a banner demanding an end to the use of anti-personnel mines at a protest meeting in Bogota in 2006. Colombia suffered more deaths and injuries by landmines in 2005 than any other country

Foreword

This booklet is one of a series of booklets prepared as part of the Protecting Education in Conflict-Affected Countries Programme, undertaken by Save the Children on behalf of the Global Education Cluster, in partnership with Education Above All, a Qatar-based non-governmental organisation. The booklets were prepared by a consultant team from Search For Common Ground.

They were written by Brendan O'Malley (editor) and Melinda Smith, with contributions from Carlyne Ashton, Saji Prelis, and Wendy Wheaton of the Education Cluster, and technical advice from Margaret Sinclair. Accompanying training workshop materials were written by Melinda Smith, with contributions from Carlyne Ashton and Brendan O'Malley. The curriculum resource was written by Carlyne Ashton and Margaret Sinclair.

Booklet topics and themes

Booklet 1	Overview
Booklet 2	Legal Accountability and the Duty to Protect
Booklet 3	Community-based Protection and Prevention
Booklet 4	Education for Child Protection and Psychosocial Support
Booklet 5	Education Policy and Planning for Protection, Recovery and Fair Access
Booklet 6	Education for Building Peace
Booklet 7	Monitoring and Reporting
Booklet 8	Advocacy

The booklets should be used alongside the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery*. References to the most relevant standards for the content of each booklet are given in the resources section.

There is also a supplementary booklet, Curriculum Resource: Introducing Humanitarian Education in Primary and Junior Secondary Schooling, which can be used with Booklet 6.

Please feel free to share these booklets with interested professionals working in ministries of education or non-governmental organisations, and others concerned with education for populations affected by armed conflict or insecurity.

If referenced, please use the following text: Global Education Cluster, Booklet 8: Advocacy, Protecting Education in Countries Affected by Conflict series (2012)

Introduction

This series of eight booklets is designed to provide:

- an overview of the problem of conflict-related threats to education.
- a range of responses that can be made by education clusters, and ministries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) dealing with education, security, protection, psychosocial support and legal accountability issues.
- a tool to be used with an accompanying set of workshop materials for use in training people in aspects of protecting education in conflict-affected countries.

This booklet focuses on advocacy.

Key messages

- Advocacy is needed to create awareness of the impact of attacks and threats to education and to encourage better protection and improved access.
- Form partnerships and coalitions to advocate for protection, prevention and accountability at local, national and international levels.
- Key elements of advocacy include identifying objectives, target audiences and messages, and collecting data to support them.
- Advocacy messages should be tailored to specific campaign audiences and events.
- Encourage media reporting of attacks on education, as this contributes to monitoring and accountability.

Background



A photo opportunity for a global campaign for a ban on child soldiers, Geneva, 2002

Advocacy by local, national and global organisations is an important tool for increasing awareness about how armed conflict affects children and young people. It can also highlight how attacks on education violate human rights and damage education systems.

Advocacy campaigns demonstrate that strengthening the law, policy and practice can stop targeted attacks and guarantee children continued access to and provision of education.

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is a call for change. It consists of different strategies aimed at influencing decision-making within organisations, and at the local, provincial, national and international levels.

Advocacy strategies can include: lobbying, social marketing, information,

education and communication, community organising, and building coalitions.

To be effective, advocacy strategies aimed at ensuring access to education in times of conflict and instability should be focused on specific actions that lead to change (eg increasing humanitarian access, promoting adherence to international laws and standards, holding those who violate children's rights accountable, and encouraging the rebuilding of schools).ⁱ

It should be evidence-based and informed by international humanitarian and human rights law. Finally, it should be rights-based, participative where possible, and people-centred. Advocacy activities can include:

- petitions, opinion polls, and surveys (including the Internet)
- letter-writing and email campaigns to



Actress Mia Farrow, a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, promotes children's rights in DR Congo

- government, heads of state, political parties, or other target audiences
- private meetings with high-level national officials
- informal, confidential discussions with those involved in a conflict
- press releases, media interviews, radio campaigns, and Facebook and Twitter campaigns
- informal discussions with editors and journalists
- goodwill ambassador missions and organised United Nations (UN) missions
- training sessions for peacekeepers or armed forces
- workshops, seminars, photography exhibitions
- multi-donor funding appeals and donor briefings
- public meetings with like-minded organisations.

Elements of an effective advocacy strategy

The following actions are key to creating an effective advocacy strategy: ⁱⁱ

- Identify an objective. Any successful advocacy effort must have a clear, achievable goal that will address the problem in question.
- Use and, where necessary, gather good data. Good research and data can be the most persuasive argument in achieving the objective, and in identifying a solution to the problem.
- Identify target audiences. Advocacy efforts must be directed at people with decision-making power. Those who can influence decision-makers, such as staff, advisers, elders, the media and the public, are also important targets.
- Adapt and communicate messages to particular audiences (types of individuals or organisations). Approach any advocacy target with messages and arguments tailored to their specific interests and responsibilities.
- Build coalitions. The power of advocacy often lies in the number of people and organisations who support the same goal. Involving many people

CASE STUDY I

India: Using data and research in children's rights advocacy

India's National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) made fact-finding visits to assess children's health and education in the states affected by the Naxalite insurgency. The NCPCR wrote to the states' Chief Secretaries, asking them to protect children's rights by implementing the following recommendations:

- children's rights training and development

- monitoring and supporting displaced children and families
- establishing agreements about Schools as Zones of Peace
- rebuilding damaged education and health service facilities in refugee camps
- identifying and mapping schools affected by conflict
- integrating emergency prevention, peace education and conflict resolution as a core part of teacher training, as undertaken in accordance with India's National Curriculum Framework, which was adopted in 2005.

representing diverse interests can build political support and ensure protection in situations of insecurity and armed conflict.

- Make persuasive presentations. Opportunities to influence key target audiences are often limited. If targets include political leaders and government officials with limited time, thorough preparation of convincing arguments and a concise, clear presentation style are critical.
- Fundraise. Sustaining an effective, long-term advocacy effort means investing time and energy in raising funds or other resources to support the campaign.
- Evaluate. To be successful, any advocacy campaign requires continuous feedback and evaluation of the objectives reached and the effectiveness of strategies.

Target audiences

Advocacy messages should be tailored to the campaign's target audiences. Advocacy organisations should use specific information, including good research and data supporting their arguments, and design the content for the audience they want to influence. For example, some target audiences may be more interested in violations of children's rights, while others might prefer the focus on long-term impact of attacks on education.

Target audiences can include education policymakers, political parties, government ministries, military officials, non-state actors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), media, faith groups, UN bodies and the general public.

Messages can be delivered through fact sheets, briefing papers, TV and radio announcements, posters, and electronic media such as websites.

Messages and target audiences:ⁱⁱⁱ

Target audience

States

Non-state groups

International community

Advocacy message

Acknowledge that armed conflict damages education

When students, teachers, and education institutions are attacked, or education institutions are used for military purposes, the damage to students, teachers and society is severe and long-lasting.

Target audience

All parties to a conflict

Advocacy message

Protect children

Protecting children and civilians during conflict is an obligation under international humanitarian law and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Target audience

Local organisations

International agencies

Advocacy message

Monitor and report attacks

States, local organisations and international agencies should rigorously monitor attacks on education. They should use such information to devise effective, coordinated responses, including prevention, rapid response, and legal and other measures aimed at holding perpetrators to account.



Yemeni students painted the walls of a Sana'a school damaged in fighting between government and tribal forces

Target audience

States

International Criminal Court

Advocacy message

Investigate and prosecute

Individuals who order, take part in, or bear command responsibility for attacks on education that violate international human rights, humanitarian and criminal law should be investigated and prosecuted, in accordance with international standards.

Target audience

UN Security Council

Advocacy message

Expand Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) coverage

The UN Security Council should ensure that adequate emphasis is given to attacks on schools and hospitals by the MRM on grave

violations against children in situations of armed conflict. It should ensure that the 'attacks on schools and hospitals' violation is used as a trigger (in line with Security Council Resolution 1998) to establish the MRM. It should request improved monitoring and reporting of attacks on schools and hospitals by MRM Country Task Forces.

Target audience

Education ministries

Education organisations and providers

Advocacy message

Implement prevention and response measures

Ministries and other bodies involved in the education sector should establish measures such as early warning systems and a rapid response system for attacks.

Target audience

Education organisations and providers

Advocacy message

Participate in the MRM and UN reporting

Education organisations should contribute to and co-operate with MRM Country Task Force monitoring of attacks on education (see Booklet 7: Monitoring and Reporting). This will give such attacks equal weight to other grave violations in UN reporting and action plans. Where the MRM does not exist, providers should contribute to UN reporting on attacks on schools via the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict to trigger the MRM.

CASE STUDY 2

Nepal: Building a national coalition to advocate for protecting education

In 2003, during the Maoist insurgency in Nepal, over 30 civil society organisations launched a full-scale campaign called Children as Zones of Peace (CZOP). The campaign carried out advocacy and monitoring, appealing to all conflict parties to respect children's rights.

The coalition included NGOs, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), and UN agencies, as well as Nepal's education journalists' association. The latter played an important role in publicising attacks on education in national and local media. CZOP began sending teams to investigate children's rights violations, and submitted reports to the National Human Rights Commission.

The coalition called on the government to fulfil its obligations under the international treaties it is a signatory to, including the UNCRC and the Optional Protocol.

CZOP's advocacy work continued throughout the armed conflict, and later during civil unrest in the Terai region. Schools there experienced the effects of strikes, political interference and violence. During 2007, 30% of schools were reportedly closed.^v In May 2011, the government declared all universities, colleges and schools 'peace zones' to safeguard citizens' right to education.

CASE STUDY 3

Somalia: Youth participation in children's rights advocacy

Somalia's ongoing conflict and lack of public accountability structures have resulted in many children's rights violations and little capacity to address these. UNICEF therefore developed an advocacy strategy aimed at establishing local and community networks that could address children's rights violations.

UNICEF's country office recruited young Child Protection Advocates (CPAs) to educate others and speak out about children's rights. The strategy's target audiences were political, military and traditional leadership, local communities and civil society.

Alongside 25 CPAs, UNICEF worked with some of Somalia's most vulnerable communities, including refugees and internally displaced people, to raise awareness about children's rights.

The CPAs were supported by a parallel Youth Development and Leadership Programme that provided skills training and education.

The CPAs attended training sessions and became actively involved in making decisions about issues that affected their lives. They also ran sessions to get the local community involved in preventing abuses.

This programme was included in UNICEF's contribution to the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children.

Different kinds of advocacy can be used at different levels simultaneously for greater effect

Local advocacy

Local advocacy by or including people affected by armed conflict aims to increase their ownership of the advocacy strategy.

It provides an opportunity for consultation and building consensus, and strengthens the voice of civil society. It also encourages greater awareness of human rights and possible mechanisms for speaking out, and for redress and accountability.

National advocacy

Representatives from different civil society organisations can form networks

or coalitions to speak with one voice.

Together, they can hold government officials, political leaders or conflict parties accountable for respecting the right to education, as well as international laws and standards.

Global advocacy

Several international organisations, including Watchlist, Education Above All and the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack,^{iv} are engaged in advocacy to protect students, teachers and education institutions from the effects of armed conflict.

These organisations target UN bodies and selected governments to strengthen the enforcement of international norms and standards.

This can improve education access and

mechanisms for preventing, responding to and monitoring attacks.

Multi-level advocacy

Local and national campaigns can become more effective by connecting with global campaigns.

Clear communication and information-sharing between these different levels are essential to developing an effective advocacy strategy.

For example, Watchlist has a field presence in selected countries that allows it to connect its national and international advocacy strategies. Multi-level advocacy can also build local capacity to carry out advocacy, nationally and internationally.

Actions to consider

1 Develop advocacy messages

Develop advocacy messages that will achieve the desired legal and policy outcomes, and make a difference on the ground. Establish clear advocacy goals and target audiences. Strategies should be specific to the context and based on evidence such as surveys, reports from partners and collected data.

2 Build an advocacy coalition or network at local and national levels

Involve national and international NGOs, parent and teacher organisations, human rights and children's rights organisations, youth groups, UN agencies, government,

and other appropriate groups.

Include stakeholders and individuals who can influence decision-makers. Seek agreement on advocacy messages and strategies, as well as funding to implement activities.

Achieve consensus among coalition members on short-term and long-term goals. Avoid setting goals that are too ambitious – choose timely and achievable objectives instead.

3 Involve students and local communities in advocacy campaigns

There are many ways of eliciting students' ideas through participatory approaches, eg:

- forming discussion groups in schools, universities and child-friendly spaces to get students talking about their concerns and advocacy mechanisms
- formally including them in workshops and national or regional conferences
- including children in designing, planning and implementing programmes, such as community reintegration and psychosocial support for children recruited by armed forces or groups.

4 Use the media

More and better media coverage of attacks on education will support monitoring and accountability. Ways of doing this include:

- talking to editors who commission stories or opinion pieces about



Afghan reporters record statements by female leaders on concerns about security

- increasing public awareness surrounding attacks on education
- facilitating journalists' visits to affected areas to meet witnesses and field experts. This will encourage reporting about attacks
- offering to provide an expert opinion by writing articles or being interviewed. This will help to publicise the scale, nature and impact of attacks on education
- encouraging journalists to cover more than just the immediate impact. This involves reporting both the motives behind attacks and their longer-term impact on the education system, as well as on stability, the conflict itself and development generally
- negotiating with education journalists and their professional associations to monitor aspects of peace agreements and codes of behaviour related to attacks on education (see Booklet 7: Monitoring and Reporting)
- applying the above points to different types of media, including radio, TV and websites, as well as newspapers and magazines. If the Internet and mobile phone technology are widely in use in the relevant country, social media can be useful for organising advocacy

campaigns, spreading messages and news about the campaign.

5 Work with international organisations

Ask UN agencies and global human rights groups to exert pressure on state and non-state groups to stop attacks on education. Urge international advocacy groups, such as Watchlist and the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, to press national authorities to change laws and implement policies to protect education.

6 Analyse the risks of advocacy messages and strategies

In situations of armed conflict and insecurity, strategies can endanger people and organisations. Such strategies could include participatory advocacy involving children, young people and communities. Make sure partners do a risk analysis, and adopt conflict-sensitive strategies that will not endanger those involved or undermine the advocacy strategy's outcome.

Useful resources

The INEE Minimum Standards most relevant to this booklet are:

- Community Participation Standard 1: Participation
- The Coordination Standard
- Analysis Standards 1–4: Assessment, Response Strategies, Monitoring, and Evaluation
- Access and Learning Standards 2 and 3: Protection and Well-being, and Facilities and Services.

UNICEF, *Saving Lives, Protecting Children: Advocacy in Emergencies, Framework for Technical Guidance for Discussion and Consultation*, 2008

Brendan O'Malley, *Schools shall be safe sanctuaries: A guide to the Declaration by Education International*, Education International, 2009

UNICEF, 'Children in War', in *The State of the World's Children 1996*
www.UNICEF.org/sowc96/ (accessed 20 October 2011)

R Sharma, *An Introduction to Advocacy Training Guide*, SARA/Academy for Educational Development Advocacy Training Guide

Advocacy organisations

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Notes

ⁱ Adapted from UNICEF, *Saving Lives, Protecting Children: Advocacy in Emergencies, Framework for Technical Guidance for Discussion and Consultation*, 2008

ⁱⁱ See note 1.

ⁱⁱⁱ Adapted from Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, *Advocacy Messages*, 2011
www.protectingeducation.org
(accessed 30 October 2011). Also see note 1.

^{iv} See 'Useful resources' above for information about these organisations

^v M Smith, 'Case Studies' in *Education Under Attack*, UNICEF

Project partners

Education Above All

Education Cluster

**Child Protection
Working Group**

**Inter-Agency Network
for Education in
Emergencies (INEE)**

**Mental Health and
Psychosocial Support
Reference Group**

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