



Evaluation of Effectiveness and Relevance of Advocacy Approaches with the EU and in EU/EFTA countries (2015-2017)

FINAL REPORT
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UNHCR Evaluation Service

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Evaluation information at a glance	
Title of the evaluation:	Evaluation of effectiveness and the relevance of advocacy approaches with the EU and in EU/EFTA countries (2015-2017)
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Type of evaluation:	Decentralized Evaluation
Countries covered:	Main focus: Austria, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Sweden, UK (case study countries) in addition to Brussels (EU-level) Secondary focus: All European Union countries in addition to Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein (hereinafter EU/EFTA region).
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Executive Summary

Overview and approach

- I. Commissioned by the Regional Bureau for Europe (RBE), this report is an evaluation of effectiveness and relevance of advocacy approaches with the European Union and in EU/EFTA countries (2015-2017), based on three thematic case studies on: public opinion (UK and Austria), resettlement and complementary pathways for admission to third countries (Germany and Ireland) and unaccompanied and separated children (Greece and Sweden).
- II. The evaluation was carried out using a combination of methods including: 158 interviews with UNHCR staff (75) and external stakeholders (83); a survey of 24 UNHCR Country Offices; visits to the above-mentioned six countries and Brussels; a document review, a financial analysis, a contribution analysis and a comparison with three external organizations.
- III. In UNHCR, advocacy has been defined as *“a strategic process that involves analysis, planning and action aimed at influencing government policies and practices, and in some cases those of other relevant actors, such as civil society or the private sector, that affect the rights of people of concern to ultimately improve their protection and realize solutions”*.¹

Findings

Design and conceptual understanding

- IV. The evaluation found broad consensus that advocacy was, and is, seen as a key tool to achieve UNHCR's protection goals in the region with a range of tactics used, mostly involving lobbying/meetings and capacity development. Advocacy was a commonly used approach to achieve objectives within the region, and therefore an integral part of UNHCR's strategy. Tactics were designed based on organizational positions and messages and while often adapted in response to opportunities, they were mostly stand-alone and less part of a comprehensive strategic advocacy process. As a reflection of the staffing structures in most offices, advocacy was often carried out by protection staff, who would liaise with RBE or HQ colleagues to clarify messages or positions. However, there is no HQ focal point or other dedicated capacity support for advocacy whom staff could turn to for advice and expertise, such as on how to use existing policy positions or messages for effective advocacy.
- V. Advocacy was largely initiated by UNHCR Country Offices as a reaction to the arrival of over 1.2 million people into Europe in 2014/2015 and was built on ongoing advocacy and pre-existing knowledge and access of locally engaged staff. There were five themes where nearly all countries were advocating on: integration, determination procedures, public attitudes, law and policy development and access to territory/non-refoulement. The audiences for advocacy were relatively consistent across the region although there was limited analysis done on the

¹ UNHCR (2018), *Module 4B - The Implementation Phase - Programming for Protection Learning Programme*.

landscape to identify more targeted or potentially new audiences. Staff monitored their own progress, but there was no systematic or standard approach to monitor and analyse advocacy results.

Relevance and appropriateness

- VI. The evaluation found that underpinning offices' advocacy approaches was a set of high-level (often implicit) assumptions that held true in some situations and in others not: that UNHCR would have access in order to influence; that a single advocacy tactic alone would be sufficient; that advocacy required little follow-up; that a strategic facilitation role for UNHCR would occur; and that change would occur in a certain manner. The lack of analysis and comprehensive (or otherwise) advocacy planning also led to issues with coherence. Understanding how all advocacy activities fitted together in a coherent manner was a challenge both internally and externally, where in the absence of documented strategies and plans, staff, partners and authorities did not always understand UNHCR's positions and desired outcomes.
- VII. The resources used in the region grew six-fold from 2014 to 2018, and during the same time, advocacy output expenditures nearly doubled. Nonetheless, staff spoke of limited time and budgets available for advocacy. Although advocacy needs had grown significantly, the review finds that expenditure was still not sufficient to address these needs. Existing planning and budgeting tools did not adequately support or facilitate planning and strategic prioritization.

Effectiveness and impact

- VIII. In six countries visited, and within the themes explored in each country, 25 instances were identified where UNHCR's advocacy had contributed to progress towards specific outcomes, such as the introduction of new programmes or laws; changes to policies and practices or piloting of new approaches; and influencing public attitudes towards persons of concern. Where change was significant, a selection of multiple tactics were used with a combination of direct and indirect advocacy. Advocacy often provoked incremental rather than systemic change.
- IX. Both internal and external factors of influence were identified that could both impede or enable advocacy. Insufficient design of the advocacy intervention was the major internal impediment and political context the main external impediment. Timeliness, being able to respond on time, was the major internal enabler and access as well as a supportive civil society the main external enablers. The role of the RBE and the HQ appear to be limited in developing and carrying out advocacy but this role depended upon the objective, level of change desired and access required. The evaluation found a general lack of coordination and sharing on advocacy experiences between countries, regional offices and HQ.

Lessons learnt

- X. Lessons drawn from three global organizations (Amnesty International, Oxfam and UNICEF) illustrate that they have HQ-based expertise and staff with advocacy roles and responsibilities at the country-level, using

communities of practice for learning and strategizing. Organizations have aligned their advocacy with their organizational strategic goals and have tools, guidance and monitoring and evaluation as support. All organizations recruit staff with advocacy specific skillsets.

- XI. Lessons drawn from the three case studies highlighted the importance of clear priorities and advocacy strategy design. The longer timeframe required was emphasised as was the need for local knowledge. Advocacy was found to bring gradual changes, combining direct and indirect advocacy, public and private. Communications could support specific advocacy objectives while it is more difficult to achieve change of public opinion alone.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

- XII. **UNHCR is uniquely positioned in Europe to influence as a respected international body given its mandate and legal expertise.** The organization can and does use its access and expertise to influence. UNHCR has adapted to the changing situation in Europe by increasingly working in coalition and using a combination of advocacy tactics. However, other actors, such as civil society and those supporting refugees and asylum-seekers may be better placed to influence in some situations where local issues and context are at the forefront and UNHCR's role would be more of a facilitator or relay between the wider sector and government.
- XIII. **Advocacy is an important component of many activities in Europe but today it is less of a strategic process and more of a tactical approach.** UNHCR needs to be able to react quickly using advocacy as a tactical response, such as in the situations it faced in Europe in 2015. At the same time, there are many issues that UNHCR needs to address that require a longer-term comprehensive strategic approach that reflects UNHCR's position, organizational identity, resources and added value.
- XIV. **UNHCR systems are not sufficiently enabling a more strategic approach to advocacy.** The planning system, as seen in the Country Operational Plans, places little emphasis on the strategic priorities and outcomes for a given area of work and within that, the role and expected contribution of advocacy. The Multi-year, Multi-partner planning approach is a better "fit" in this regard. Financial systems are limited in their support for advocacy that requires longer term investment. Knowledge management, learning, monitoring and evaluation systems are not in place to provide the careful attention needed to measure advocacy successes, learn from failures and consequently improve activities.
- XV. **Across Europe UNHCR has very little dedicated capacity and support for advocacy.** UNHCR staff carry out advocacy as a task amongst many others with little support, capacity or training. Functions are not designed for the multiple skills needed to deliver effective advocacy, such as communications, policy analysis, stakeholder management and personal access. The need to see advocacy as a joint responsibility for the multifunctional team is yet to be explored consistently across Europe.

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- XVI. **Setting advocacy priorities in Europe needs a balance of the local to the regional to the global.** In most cases, advocacy was locally driven in Europe, guided by the context and challenges seen for persons of concern. While advocacy was often anchored on the relevant legal references and available guidelines, the support and guidance from the regional offices and HQ varied widely, often depending upon the issue and the staff involved, rather than a strategic and collaborative approach.
- XVII. **The ability of UNHCR to influence European public opinions towards refugees needs further reflection.** Activities aimed at influencing public opinions were designed and implemented in a manner where it was not possible to measure their effects. UNHCR should consider further what the aim is of its public opinion influencing activities in Europe, given its limited advocacy capacity and resources, the challenges to influence attitudes and the positive trend seen in polling of Europeans' attitudes towards refugees. Public opinion tactics can work well in the support of specific advocacy objectives and this type of work could usefully be enhanced further.
- XVIII. **The relationships between HQ, the RBE, Private Sector Partnerships service (PSP), Regional and Country Offices to support and progress advocacy priorities needs further definition.** The opportunities to advocate up and down the chain between HQ and Country Offices are not always capitalized upon. Setting priorities and roles for advocacy between these different levels would increase the ability of the organization to support priorities set at all levels: country, EU-level and globally.

Summary Recommendations

The report highlights six key areas for development; four within Europe and two at the global level:²

Area for development and recommendation

Recommendation 1: The Europe Bureau and Country Offices should introduce a more comprehensive strategic process for advocacy in Europe with a multi-year timeframe and linked to the overall plans, with clear roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation 2: The Europe Bureau should set up to five advocacy priorities for Europe on annual/biennial basis. It is recommended that these are done in a collaborative manner as part of multi-year planning and are linked to the European Union Engagement Agenda and country priorities and underpinned by necessary positions and messaging.

Recommendation 3: The Europe Bureau should define advocacy roles and responsibilities in Europe and ensure dedicated advocacy capacity at Bureau, Brussels and country level. This could include appointing focal points among its staff for the main advocacy priority areas, while ensuring an advocacy country focal point in each office and having diverse staffing profiles for advocacy with the European Union and other key advocacy locations. A community of practice could support such efforts.

Recommendation 4: The Europe Bureau should re-orientate public opinion activities in Europe; and in so doing ensure that efforts are clearly considered against baselines, knowledge of public attitudes,

² Detailed recommendations and suggested steps are available in Section 7 of the report "Overall conclusions and recommendations".

specific advocacy objectives, communication resources; and are measurable against realistic outcomes that are consequently monitored and evaluated.

Recommendation 5: UNHCR should increase resourcing and accountability of advocacy globally, taking into consideration the regionalization process. This should include clarity on where accountability and capacities should be placed for advocacy organizationally and development of guidance and learning material.

Recommendation 6: UNHCR should adapt systems, such as budget, planning, results and learning systems, to support a more strategic approach to advocacy.

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The annexes are available in a separate document for greater accessibility:

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Annex 2	List of persons interviewed
Annex 3	Main documents reviewed / Bibliography
Annex 4	Contribution analysis summary
Annex 5	Description of methodology and evaluation matrix
Annex 6	Interview guide
Annex 7	Survey design
Annex 8	Evaluation Terms of Reference

List of abbreviations

AHC-O	Assistant High Commissioner for Operations
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CIMU	Communication and Information Management Team
COP	Country Operational Plans
DESS	Department of Emergency Security and Supply
DER	Division of External Relations
DIP	Division of International Protection
DPSM	Division of Programme Support and Management
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ES	Evaluation Service
EU	European Union
EQ	Evaluation Question
EQA	Evaluation Quality Assurance
GLC	Global Learning Centre
HQ	Headquarters
KII	Key Informant Interview
IOM	International Organization for Migration
INGO	International Non-government Organization
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MYMP	Multi-Year Multi-Partner
PI	Public Information
PSP	Private Sector Partnerships service
RBE	Regional Bureau for Europe
RMRP	Refugee and Migrant Response Plan
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SIL	Semi-independent living
ToR	Terms of Reference
UASC	Unaccompanied and Separated Children
UK	The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund

1. Introduction

1. This report is a decentralized evaluation of effectiveness and relevance of UNHCR's advocacy approaches with the European Union and in EU/EFTA countries from 2015 to 2017 ("EU/EFTA region").³ The evaluation was carried out between June and November 2018 by two external evaluation consultants with the support of the Evaluation Service (ES).

1.1 Aims of the evaluation

2. The aim of the evaluation is to provide the Regional Bureau for Europe (RBE) with an evidence-based⁴ assessment of the effectiveness and relevance of the overall advocacy approaches being used with the European Union and in the EU/EFTA region. For this evaluation, advocacy is considered as a strategic process to influence law, policies and practices with specific outcomes. Communications is considered as a strategic process to inform, influence or persuade audiences. Communications can be considered as part of advocacy depending upon its intended goals.
3. The evaluation plots the effectiveness of efforts to influence specific policies and practices by examining aspects such as advocacy design, management and implementation. The evaluation has examined whether the design of the advocacy efforts were based on reasonable assumptions, appropriate contextual entry points in line with the mandate and organizational identity, and the extent to which the execution of these efforts including – but not limited to – communications was effective.
4. Using three thematic advocacy case studies, the evaluation reflects on and analyses what has worked well and what has worked less well for UNHCR's advocacy in the EU/EFTA region during 2015-2017. In the three cases, the evaluation considers results of advocacy efforts against stated objectives of the advocacy interventions to assess factors that might have contributed to or hindered their effectiveness. The evaluation methodology used was contribution analysis.⁵
5. The evaluation is expected to inform the development and implementation of future advocacy strategies and approaches of UNHCR within the EU/EFTA region, which will improve protection and support solutions for persons of concern. It may further inform advocacy and communication approaches and strategies more broadly in UNHCR.

³ This covers the 32 countries falling under the four Regional Offices RRNE, RRWE, RRSE and RRCE as well as the stand-alone office in Greece. In addition to European Union countries, this includes the EFTA countries, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Lichtenstein.

⁴ Evidence-based implying triangulation across different sources and primary and secondary data to generate the evidence presented in this report. Whenever self-assessed/reported data is used this is clearly specified.

⁵ See Annex 4 for a more detailed overview of this approach.

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6. The primary audience is the RBE and European Country and Regional offices. Secondary audiences might include the Divisions for International Protection (DIP), the Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM) and Division of External Relations (DER), as well as others involved in advocacy in UNHCR.

1.2 Background context and its evolution

7. The arrival of over 1.2 million people⁶ into Europe in 2014/2015 and the public perception crisis that accompanied it became compounded by lack of preparatory measures by Member States.⁷ UNHCR has been present across Europe prior to this period and has been observing trends through social media monitoring and reports of interviews with new arrivals⁸ to encourage sharing of available contingency planning. Respectful of the position and capacity of Member States and their legal framework to protect refugees, and aware of its relatively limited operational presence across Europe, in early 2015 the organization continued its largely non-operational presence in the region only taking on some responsibilities in Greece. Persons of concern moving through Europe became a highly political issue as many did not want to apply for asylum in the first country of arrival. Media coverage since mid-2015 on the conflict in Syria, on conditions in Calais, France, on the situation of those entering Europe by foot on Western Balkans roads or arriving across the Mediterranean, set the stage for a turning point in UNHCR's communication on and in Europe.
8. Prior to 2015 UNHCR sought to enhance the protection of persons of concern in Northern, Western, Southern and Central Europe through a multi-faceted strategy of standard-setting, advocacy and partnership with limited operational involvement (Refugee Status Determination in Italy, France and Spain). However, given the crisis, in 2015 UNHCR launched an emergency response to support and complement Member State efforts to provide protection and assistance to persons of concern. UNHCR proceeded to set up refugee coordination mechanisms in Greece and the Balkans. An Emergency Task Force co-led by the RBE and the Department of Emergency Security and Supply (DESS) was established as a senior-level working group headed by the Assistant High Commissioner for Operations (AHC-O). The Director of the RBE was appointed as Regional Refugee Coordinator⁹, and the Deputy Director as Head of Operations. The first fast track of 600 emergency staffing for 20 locations including Greece and the Balkans was issued in September 2015 and the second one in November 2015.¹⁰

⁶ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>.

⁷ Only detailed in measures to address the Mediterranean situation proposed by the European Union and its Member States on 23 April 2015, and further detailed in the European Agenda on Migration released on 13 May 2015.

⁸ *Emergency Response to the Europe Crisis, Report produced by RBE & Department of Emergency Security and Supply (DESS) – FINAL 19 June 2018, page 1, internal document.*

⁹ [UNHCR, *Initial Response Plan for the Refugee Crisis in Europe, June 2015 – December 2016, page 7, See www.unhcr.org/partners/donors/55ee99880/unhcr-supplementary-appeal-initial-response-refugee-crisis-europe-december.html.*

¹⁰ DESS/RBE (2018), *Op. Cit.* page 10.

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9. Having previously utilised funds from the Syria Situation to begin implementation of the initial response *Special Mediterranean Initiative Plan*¹¹ (June-December 2015), the first formal appeal was launched in September 2015.¹² Each office responded differently depending on the existing platform in the country, often in innovative and creative ways, such as: monitoring influx at borders, bringing in additional staff and interpreting traditional guidelines to understand where efforts were best placed¹³ and where UNHCR had to be operational (Western Balkans and Greece for example).
 10. On 28 October 2015 the AHC-O, at the request of the High Commissioner for Refugees, opened the 'Winter Cell' - a cross-cutting, inter-divisional cell at Headquarters to respond to the emergency situation in Europe,¹⁴ providing an analysis on what changing meteorological conditions might bring, and offer data driven insights into the situation through leveraging partners. The Cell remained operational until June 2016 when it was disbanded and absorbed into the RBE. In 2016 the situation remained largely unchanged and in addition to the regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan 2016 for Europe (RMRP¹⁵), supplementary appeals were launched for Europe. A significant contextual factor was the signing, on 18 March 2016, between the European Council and Turkey of an agreement aimed at ending irregular migration flows from Turkey to Europe.¹⁶ By the end of 2016, UNHCR published a proposal to European Union Member States to improve the response to the crisis in the report, *Better Protecting Refugees*.¹⁷
 11. By 2018, despite a six-fold drop in the number of new arrivals compared to 2016, public opinion and European politics remained divided. The 2015 crisis put immigration at the top of people's minds in Europe; in the fall of 2015, immigration matched unemployment amongst European Union citizens as the most important issue but it gradually reduced in importance in the following years.¹⁸ While public debates and opinion remain divided, studies have shown consistently that those communities in Europe with most immigration have the most

¹¹ See www.unhcr.org/partners/donors/557ad7e49/unhcrs-special-mediterranean-initiative-plan-enhanced-operational-response.html

¹² See www.unhcr.org/partners/donors/55ee99880/unhcr-supplementary-appeal-initial-response-refugee-crisis-europe-december.html

¹³ DESS/RBE, Op. Cit.

¹⁴ See www.unhcr.org/innovation/migration-mitigation-and-maps-the-predictive-role-of-unhcrs-first-winter-cell/ &

¹⁵ <http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/RRMRP%20Europe%20Jan.-Dec%202016%20-%20Revision%20May%202016.pdf>

¹⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20180314_eu-turkey-two-years-on_en.pdf

¹⁷ *Better Protecting Refugees*, December 2016. Available at: www.refworld.org/docid/58385d4e4.html

¹⁸ For example, the European Social Survey (2017) has found European publics have become slightly more positive, not negative, about the effect of migration on their societies since 2002. IPSOS immigration and refugee poll (2017) has found between 2011 and 2016 those that felt immigration has had a positive impact has increased in some countries (e.g. Belgium, UK and Germany), remained unchanged (e.g. Spain) or decreased (e.g. France and Sweden). The EU-wide Eurobarometer survey (2017) has reported positive feeling towards immigrants and their contribution to society has increased steadily across Europe from 2015 to 2017. See: www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2017-09/Global_Advisor_Immigration.pdf, www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/findings/ESS7_toplines_issue_7_immigration.pdf; <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82538>

favourable views towards immigrants – and attitudes towards immigrants have improved gradually in most European Union countries over the past decade. At the same time, many Europeans fall into an “anxious or conflicted middle” – aware of the benefits of immigration but concerned about the risks also.¹⁹

12. UNHCR partnered more noticeably with International Organization for Migration (IOM) in June 2018 to deliver a *Proposal for a regional cooperative arrangement for disembarkation* after the Valletta Political Declaration and Plan of Action, where Member States committed to addressing the root causes of displacement and irregular migration, while supporting countries who receive large numbers of refugees and migrants.²⁰

1.3 Advocacy within UNHCR

13. Advocacy is considered as:

“A vital part of our work at UNHCR to transform policies and services that affect displaced and stateless people on a national, regional and global level.”²¹

UNHCR’s Strategic Directions 2017-2021 recognise the importance of ‘*generating political will*’ and ‘*advocating*’ to address issues impacting on the rights of persons of concern.²²

14. In 2017, DIP initiated activities aimed at better understanding and supporting advocacy within the organization, while the Global Learning Centre (GLC) initiated a learning module on advocacy and humanitarian negotiations as part of its Certification Programme for International Protection. The GLC and DIP surveyed 6,000 protection staff on training needs relating to advocacy, and carried out in-depth interviews with over 30 staff. DIP also conducted a benchmarking exercise to establish how other organizations understand and practice advocacy. This exercise found that “*there is no unified guidance or practical tools on how to conduct effective advocacy actions*” within UNHCR.²³ This work stream moved to DPSM in February 2018 and has integrated learning on advocacy and capacity development approaches within the Programming for Protection Learning Programme²⁴ as well as developing an advocacy toolkit that is expected during 2019.
15. **Advocacy set-up:** There is currently no structural location of advocacy within UNHCR HQ. Some staff interviewed saw the reason for this as advocacy being a cross-cutting tool. Advocacy is seen as a shared

¹⁹ Glorius, B. (2018). *Public opinion on immigration and refugees and patterns of politicisation*. CEASEVAL Working paper 03-2018; European Union (2017). *Integration of immigrants in the EU*. Eurobarometer 469; Dempster, H., & Hargrave, K. (2017). *Understanding public attitudes towards refugees and migrants*. Working Paper 512. London: Overseas Development Institute.

²⁰ [UNHCR, IOM. *Proposal for a regional cooperative arrangement ensuring predictable disembarkation and subsequent processing of persons rescued-at-sea*. 27 June 2018. Page 1. See www.unhcr.org/5b35e60f4

²¹ See www.unhcr.org/advocacy.html

²² UNHCR (2017). *Strategic Directions 2017-2021*.

²³ DIP (2017), *Advocacy Benchmarking and Key Concepts* (presentation)

²⁴ UNHCR (2018), *Module 4B - The Implementation Phase - Programming for Protection Learning Programme*

responsibility across UNHCR and is represented as an activity output across operational plans and budgets. Within Europe, the RBE emphasises in its 2017 regional strategy that it will be “*advocating for the rights of asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless people while maintaining a robust emergency response*”.²⁵ Responsibility for advocacy within the RBE is mainstreamed within the staffs’ roles, dependent upon their thematic or geographic responsibility. The Brussels PLUS Unit coordinates European-level policy advocacy responses with Country Offices and directly with European Union institutions.

16. **Concerning a definition of advocacy**, the DIP benchmarking exercise distilled numerous definitions of advocacy to come up with a working definition that is consistent and coherent with those of other organizations and with those of different UNHCR documents and pronouncements. “*In UNHCR, advocacy is a strategic process that involves analysis, planning and action aimed at influencing government policies and practices, and in some cases those of other relevant actors, such as civil society or the private sector, that affect the rights of people of concern to ultimately improve their protection and realise solutions.*”²⁶ This evaluation refers to this definition with the addition that “*policies and practices*” also includes legislation/laws.
17. **This evaluation considers communications as a strategic process to inform, influence or persuade audiences**²⁷. Communications may or may not be considered as part of an advocacy initiative depending upon its intended goals. This evaluation makes a distinction between communications as a tool for advocacy and as a stand-alone process that has its own specific outcomes. The focus on this evaluation is on the former. However, the case study on public opinion does consider communication activities outside the definition of advocacy, as activities were designed to influence a public’s attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers with no stated link to influencing policies or practices. It is a commonly seen communication activity to influence people’s attitudes, such as their opinions on refugees and asylum-seekers and not go further than this to a desired policy change.

Box 1: What distinguishes advocacy and communications?

Advocacy is a process to influence policy and practices. Communications is a process to inform, influence or persuade audiences. A key distinction between advocacy and communications is that advocacy always has as its goal a change to policies and practices whereas communications is focused on changing the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of audiences. Communications can be part of advocacy where it has a clear link to a desired policy/practice change, such as mobilising audiences to put pressure on authorities to adopt or modify policies. At the same time, a lot of communications will not have an advocacy goal to influence policy/practice change but a communications goals, such as changing the attitudes of an audience to be more positive towards refugees and asylum-seekers or improving their understanding of the work of UNHCR.

²⁵ UNHCR (2017), *Global Appeal 2017 Update*

²⁶ Page 6, UNHCR, (2018), *Module 4B, Op. Cit.*

²⁷ UN-JIU (2015), *Public information and the communications policies and practices in the United Nations system.* JIU/REP/2015/4., p. 1.

1.4 Defining advocacy strategy and best practices

18. Following is an explanation of what constitutes an advocacy strategy and summary best practices for advocacy as a support for using this report.

Box 2: What is an advocacy strategy?

Advocacy is a strategic process involving analysis, planning and action. An **advocacy strategy** sets out what is desired to be achieved and how it will be done. An advocacy strategy document normally contains the following elements drawing from research, consultation and analysis:

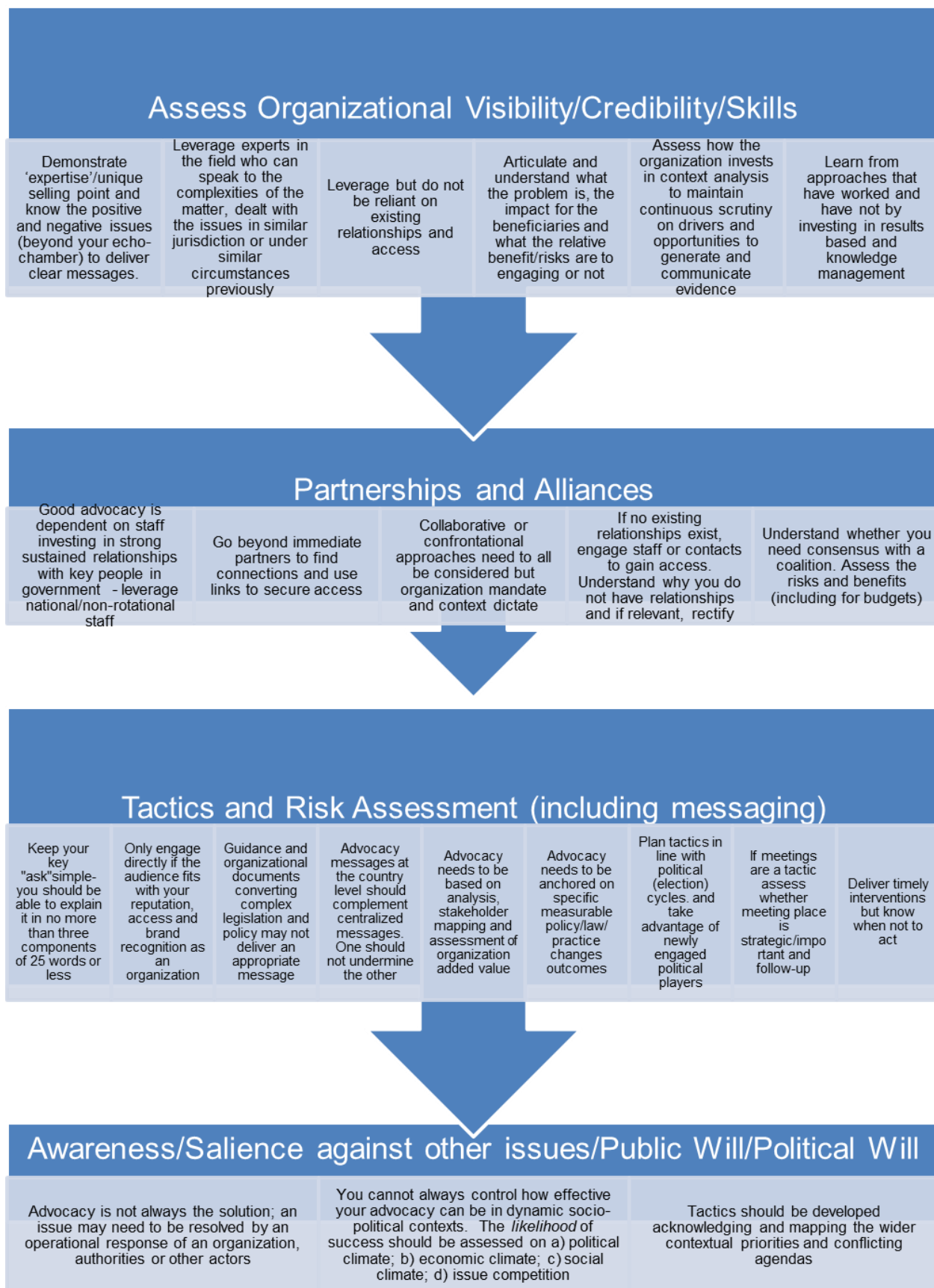
- Policy environment analysis;
- Audience analysis;
- Intended interim and long-term outcomes;
- Theory of change or explicit logic of how change will occur and the role of the organization in contributing to that change;
- Key messages;
- Activity plan;
- Monitoring tracking.

Global organizations often implement advocacy strategies:

- At the country level (to complement or as part of operational plans/strategies) (for example UNICEF country advocacy strategy);
- On major global issues that the organization wants to tackle (for example Oxfam has a global advocacy strategy on inequality); or
- On regional issues (for example, Norwegian Refugee Council has a regional advocacy strategy on the Syria Crisis).

19. The chart on the next page summarises best practices for the delivery of effective advocacy based on a review of available literature.

Figure 1: Best practices for delivering effective advocacy



1.5 The evaluation and this report

20. **The report is organized around the four key evaluation questions (EQs) finalised in the inception phase.** Following a chapter on the methodology used in the evaluation each following chapter addresses one key evaluation question.

Chapter 2: Methodology - Main approaches and methods used along with methodological limitations.

Chapter 3: Design and conceptual understanding - focuses on how advocacy has been designed and strategized within UNHCR.

Chapter 4: Relevance and appropriateness - Considers the assumptions, coherence, consistency and relevance of UNHCR's advocacy in Europe.

Chapter 5: Effectiveness and impact - Discusses the effectiveness and impact of UNHCR's advocacy with particular reference to the six countries visited.

Chapter 6: Lessons - Distils some of the key lessons to inform both the future concept and direction of advocacy within UNHCR in Europe.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations - The chapter makes six recommendations that take forward the findings of this evaluation. Following is an explanation of what constitutes an advocacy strategy and summary best practices for advocacy as a support for using this report.

2. Methodology

21. This chapter details the key elements of the evaluation methodology including its framework, key methods used, the evaluation team and constraints and how they were addressed. Further details on methodology including the evaluation matrix and tools are found in Annexes 4-7.

2.1 Evaluation framework and key approaches

22. The evaluation is framed around four key EQ. These are listed below along with the sub-questions developed during the inception phase.

1. Design and conceptual understanding
EQ 1) In the period under review (2015-2017) how has ‘advocacy’ been described, designed and strategized in the context of UNHCR work in the EU/EFTA region? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which types of advocacy strategies, approaches and related activities (including from a communication perspective) have been carried out in the period under review?• What were the different audiences? How were different audiences and targets for different types of advocacy (and communication) strategies and related activities identified?• Which types of routine monitoring and analysis have been carried out to inform any correction and adjustments of advocacy and communication strategies and related actions?
2. Relevance and appropriateness
EQ 2) What were the assumptions and expected outcomes from the advocacy strategies and approaches in selected cases and what can be learned from this? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In these different advocacy strategies, what were the assumptions about how these might support and further specific objectives as identified by UNHCR RBE?• To what extent were advocacy and communication strategies clear and cohesive, with a clear and consistent set of messages and audiences?• Do these strategies include the necessary elements of an advocacy strategy?• What resources (human, financial and pro-bono) were available to implement the different advocacy strategies? How does this compare between the three cases?
3. Effectiveness and impact
EQ 3) How effective have selected UNHCR advocacy strategies and interventions in the European Union contexts been in supporting progress towards specific outcomes of interest (and knowledge, attitude, and behaviour level) in the 2015-17 period? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Under what conditions have selected UNHCR advocacy (and communication strategies) been more or less effective at contributing to positive outcomes of interest?• Which factors (internal and external; within and outside UNHCR’s spheres of control) have influenced:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The space within which UNHCR positions and carries out its advocacy (and communication) strategies and activities - timeliness of advocacy and related communication activities- The more or less proactive and reactive approach to advocacy (and related communication strategies and activities).• What have been the roles played by the UNHCR Bureau for Europe, and other Divisions and Offices in Geneva in developing and carrying out selected advocacy and communication strategies?

4. Lessons Learned

EQ4) Which lessons can be learned from UNCHR advocacy and communication strategies and approaches moving forward?

- What lessons can be learned from a comparative analysis of selected examples of advocacy set-up of comparable organizations?
- What lessons can be learned from the three case studies of this evaluation for moving forward?

23. The evaluation team worked with UNHCR to develop an evaluation matrix (see Annex 5). This details more specific indicators, data sources and methods used for data collection and analysis. The key methods used in response to each evaluation question are listed below.

Table 1: Evaluation methods and Evaluation question focus

Method	EQ focus	Focus and detail
Document review	1,2,3,4	Documents included review of the Country Operation Plans (COP); Multi Year Multi Partner strategy (MYMP) for Sweden; Country specific documents (as annexed include action plans, work plans, focal point lists), internal briefing notes, thematic talking points and legislative documents, proposed CEAS reform components); DER Communicating Protection (June 2018); Communication workshop documentation (2013), Strategic communication Training (2012); Xenophobia & Racism Background Papers (2009); DIP papers on complementary pathways; DIP Review of advocacy practices in UNHCR (2018); Global Representatives Meeting: Advocacy Presentation (2018); External literature of advocating and evaluating advocacy (various); Global Strategic Directions (2017-2021); Protection for Programming documents (various); Europe Crisis Overview (2018); Winter Cell Book and DESS Review (internal); Desperate Journeys (2017) and associated documents; Better Protecting Refugees (2016) and associated internal handling documents; Social media guidance and strategic communications documents (various); Europe Bureau Strategic Priorities. A full list is found at annex 3.
Key Informant Interviews (KII)	1,2,3,4	158 key informant interviews (KII) with key stakeholders: 75 internal and 83 external have been completed. Interviews were semi-structured guided by an interview checklist based on the evaluation matrix and adapted for individuals' areas of experience (See Annex 2 for list of interviewees and Annex 6 for the interview guide used).
Survey	1,2,3	A taxonomy of advocacy interventions and approaches undertaken by Regional and Country Offices in the European Union Europe was completed based on a survey of 25 countries (out of 32 countries); 17 countries completed it fully; and 8 partially. ²⁸ One consolidated response was requested per country. Offices were supplied with a pre-completed Excel sheet listing the main themes/objectives of their current COP for which advocacy output had been included and asked to provide details on their advocacy activities for each theme/objective (hereinafter 'the Survey').
Visits to UNHCR Offices	1,2,3,4	Six countries were visited by the evaluation team: Austria, Germany, Greece, Ireland Sweden and UK, in addition to the Brussels office and Geneva HQ. During visits to Brussels and Country Offices, KIIs were held with staff and external stakeholders. In

²⁸ Complete responses received from: Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, and UK. Partial responses from: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden.

		Greece, the Moria Reception and Identification Centre for refugees and asylum- seekers was visited on the island of Lesbos.
Case study	1,2,3,4	Three case studies of thematic work on a) Public Opinion; b) Resettlement and Complementary Pathways; and c) Unaccompanied and Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) have been carried out, triangulated with research from the experiences of six countries: UK and Austria for public opinion; Germany and Ireland for Resettlement and Complementary Pathways and Greece and Sweden for UASC. The case study themes were selected jointly by the RBE and the ES, as detailed in the Terms of Reference (ToR).
Contribution analysis	3	Based on the data collected, a step-by-step process of contribution analysis was carried out to establish the level of contribution of a given advocacy initiative to observed results. The analysis is based on being able to determine or re-construct what were the intended outcomes of a give initiative. The method involved gathering and assessing evidence to support the contribution of UNHCR to the changes seen. Evidence gathered included policy documents, legislation and multiple interviewees confirming changes seen. In total, 25 instances were identified and analysed. A summary of the contribution analysis can be found at Annex 4.
External comparison	4	A benchmarking exercise has been carried out to understand structural comparisons to other external organizations: <i>Amnesty</i> ; <i>UNICEF</i> and <i>Oxfam</i> .
Financial analysis	2	Analysis considered expenditure in EU/EFTA region countries extracted from UNHCR's operational expenditure tracking. The analysis examined expenditure by goal, objectives and outputs.
Validation presentation	4	A presentation and discussion in Geneva to discuss the evaluation's findings, recommendations and lessons identified.

2.2 Strength of the evidence

24. The evaluation was based on a broad and diverse range of information and data. The data was collated, triangulated and analysed and is the basis for the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this report. All EQs findings have a strong or medium evidence base. The evaluation report notes the source of key findings where relevant.

Table 2: Strength of the evidence supporting findings by evaluation question

Evaluation Question 1 on Design and conceptual understanding: Evidence: Strong - Findings are based on multiple data sources including, documentation, case studies, the KIIs and direct input from UNHCR offices through the Survey.

Evaluation Question 2 on Relevance and appropriateness: Evidence: Medium - Findings are based on documentation, the KIIs, case studies and the financial analysis. The structure of the financial data does not allow a full analysis given that advocacy is both a goal and output and neither may give a 100 per cent accurate view on advocacy expenditure.

Evaluation Question 3 on Effectiveness and impact: Evidence: Strong - Findings were supported by primary data and analysed using the contribution analysis method. These provided a strong picture of advocacy progress and challenges in the six countries visited.

Evaluation Question 4 on Lessons: Evidence: Medium - Lessons all draw on evidence analysed in the three preceding questions and were discussed during a presentation with the staff of RBE and other relevant units. Lessons from three comparable organizations were based on available documentation only as staff of these organizations were not available for interviews for this evaluation.

2.3 Evaluation team and schedule

25. A two person team undertook the evaluation. The team was made up of:
- **Glenn O'Neil** - team leader and advocacy evaluation specialist. Responsibilities included overall responsibility for quality of evaluation data collection, analysis and final products.
 - **Rebecca Emerson-Keeler**- team member, evaluation and strategic communication specialist; former staff member of UNHCR with knowledge of UNHCR systems processes and terminology. Rebecca supported Glenn for the data collection and analysis at all stages of the evaluation.
26. **Anita Leutgeb**, evaluation consultant, supported the team during the visit to Vienna, Austria and in analysing German language documentation.
27. Evaluation analysis, conclusions and recommendations were developed jointly by the team. The evaluation comprised:
- June-July 2018 - inception phase.
 - August-September 2018 - data collection with visits to six countries and Brussels.
 - October-November 2018: -data analysis and report writing.
 - November-December 2018 -review and finalisation of the evaluation report.
 - UNHCR then leads the communication of the report findings and provides a management response to recommendations.

2.4 Ethical approach

28. The evaluation was guided by an ethical approach which adhered to principles of a:
- commitment to producing a transparent evaluation of practical value;
 - commitment to avoid harm to participants and also the operational environment for UNHCR
 - respect for cultural norms;
 - commitment to an inclusive approach ensuring access and participation of women, men, girls and boys and socially excluded groups guided by UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity policy;²⁹
 - commitment to ensure participation in the evaluation is voluntary and free from external pressure; and
 - commitment to confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

2.5 Constraints and limitations of the methodology and how addressed

29. The evaluation methodology faced the following constraints with the coping strategy detailed in *italics*:
- a) Lack of baseline and overarching strategic approach to advocacy, such as definition of specific objectives and outcomes, indicators, audiences and messages for advocacy initiatives:

²⁹ UNHCR (2011a) 'Age, Gender and Diversity Policy: Working with people and communities for equality and protection'.

This was addressed in part by the evaluation team re-constructing the advocacy approach on a case-by-case basis, based on KII and available documentation.

- b) Availability of social media metrics and attitude/behaviour change polling to assess changes to the opinions/attitudes of audiences.

Despite some metrics and reporting around reach provided by the Strategic Communications Section, limited statistics or monitoring tools have been developed to assess whether communications efforts go beyond reach to engagement and attitude/behaviour change of the intended audiences. This limitation has been reflected in key findings around public opinion.

- c) Time lapse on contribution of advocacy efforts in 2015 and before the crisis to assess contribution of efforts and rotation of key staff.

Given the good networks in the organization, the evaluation team managed to be in contact with those engaged in advocacy and communications in the early stages of the crisis. A snowballing sampling approach was adopted effectively for this purpose.³⁰ A list of persons interviewed is found at Annex 2.

- d) Limited availability of some stakeholders to participate in this process.

In some of the focus countries for the case studies, external stakeholders flagged as relevant to determining contribution of UNHCR were unavailable to meet. The evaluation team was confident enough data and information was available from other sources. Despite many efforts, advocacy staff were not available from comparable organizations for interviews; therefore, available public documentation had to be the basis for a comparison.

- e) Limited cross-border insight on cross-cutting areas of concern.

The evaluation focused efforts on countries identified through case studies. However, there were some gaps in understanding how offices worked together for similar goals in challenging circumstance. For example, work in France and the UK could have been useful to look into in greater detail given the pressures identified in Calais; same as for Ireland and Italy given concerns with the Dublin Regulation.

³⁰ *The evaluation only started data collection in 2018 but looked at data from 2015 and interviewed persons that were in relevant posts from 2015 onwards.*

3. Design and conceptual understanding

How has ‘advocacy’ been described, designed and strategized in the context of UNHCR work in the EU/EFTA region?

Key findings

The evaluation found broad consensus that advocacy was, and is, seen as a key tool to achieve UNHCR’s protection goals in the region with a range of tactics used, mostly involving lobbying/meetings and capacity development. Tactics were designed less as part of a comprehensive strategic advocacy process and more opportunistic as stand-alone activities to support an area of work. Advocacy was often carried out by protection staff with no HQ focal point or dedicated capacity support for advocacy whom staff could turn to for advice and expertise, such as on how to use existing policy positions or messages for effective advocacy.

Advocacy during the 2015 crisis was largely initiated by UNHCR Country Offices based on the challenges that arose, and the pre-existing knowledge, existing advocacy and access of locally engaged staff. Based on the Survey there were five themes where nearly all countries were advocating on: integration, determination procedures, public attitudes, law and policy development and access to territory/non-refoulement. The audiences for advocacy were relatively consistent across the region although there was limited analysis done on the landscape to identify more targeted or potentially new audiences. Staff monitored their progress but there was no systematic or standard approach to monitor and analyse advocacy results.

30. This chapter considers how advocacy has been described, designed and strategized by UNHCR within the EU/EFTA region. It also considers audiences targeted by advocacy and what monitoring and analysis was in place.

3.1 Types of advocacy strategies

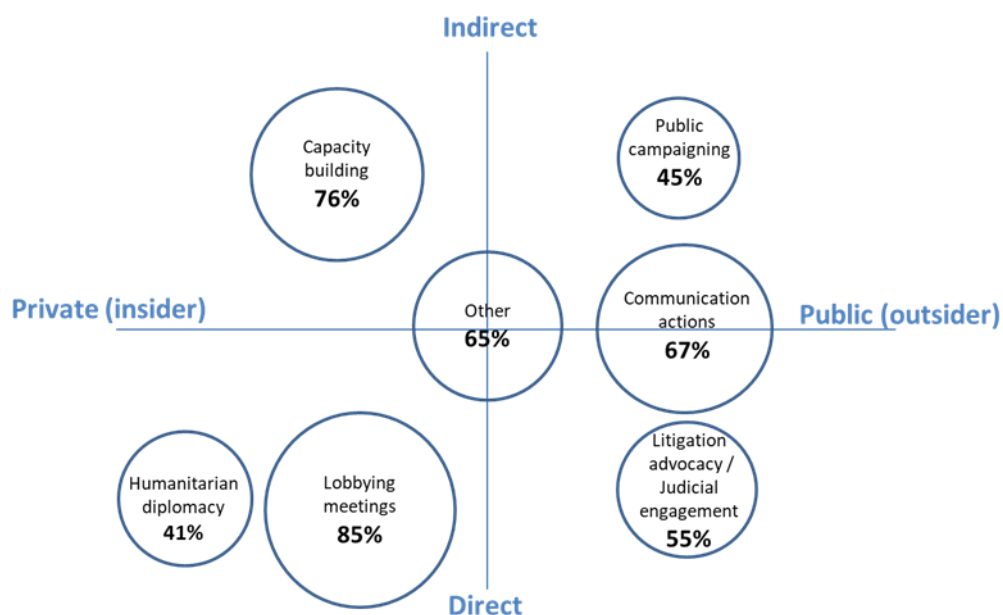
31. Within the EU/EFTA region, all UNHCR offices were found to be engaging in advocacy, essentially to influence policies, practices and laws.³¹ Given its limited operational footprint in the region and its mandate, advocacy is a key tool to achieving UNHCR’s protection goals in the region (advocacy roles are discussed further in chapter 5.3). Where UNHCR was operational, such as in Greece and Italy, advocacy also proved an important contribution to both short-term and long-term change benefiting refugees and asylum-seekers (see case study on UASC). UNHCR also had the access to authorities and expertise to influence laws, policies and practices, according to both stakeholders and UNHCR staff.

32. A range of tactics were used to carry out advocacy, with the majority of advocacy involving lobbying/meetings and capacity development. “Other” included legal commentaries, partnerships and coordination. Tactics tended to be carried out in a collaborative “insider” approach (i.e. collaborating with authorities and other stakeholders) rather than a confrontational “outsider” approach (i.e. publicly opposing authorities or other stakeholders). The following chart maps the main tactics used by insider/outsider approaches and direct/indirect approaches.

³¹ In the Survey, 17 countries identified the type of change desired as following: 50 per cent-policy; 50 per cent-practice; 40 per cent-law; 18 per cent-public opinion; 8 per cent -other (multiple responses possible).

Figure 2: Tactics used in advocacy (as per cent of all advocacy activities)

Source: Evaluation Survey (25 countries)



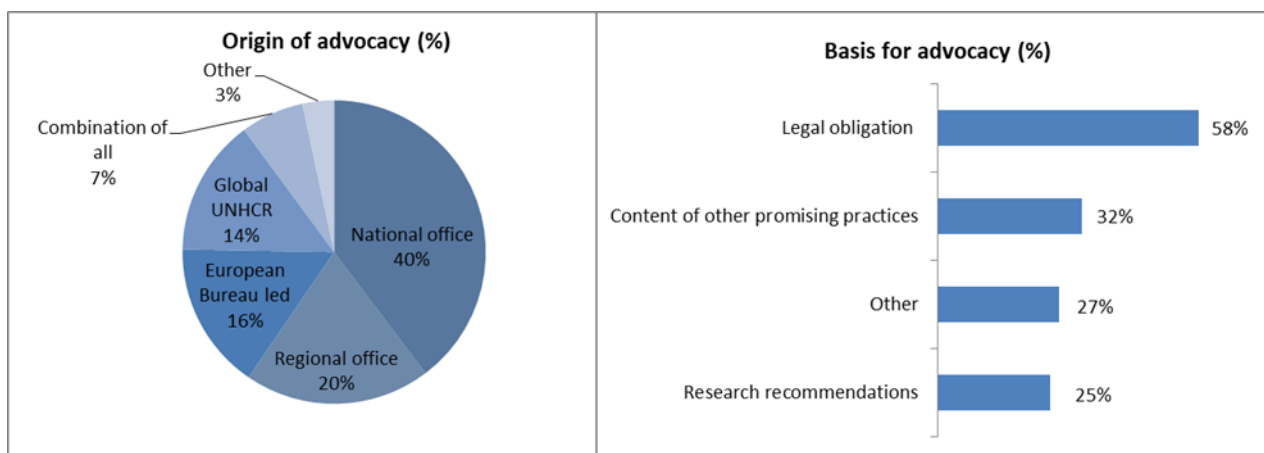
33. While linked to the overall themes of the countries' objectives, advocacy tactics were designed less as part of a comprehensive (or otherwise) strategic process and more opportunistic as individual activities to support an area of work. For example, an advocacy activity of an office, such as a meeting, could be used to support work in resettlement but it was not necessarily part of a broader long-term advocacy strategy for resettlement (see case study on for Resettlement and Complementary Pathways). This also implied that advocacy activities were often seen as individual or stand alone, tasks for staff and less as cross-cutting activities for teams. Many of the advocacy efforts were linked to a legal basis, and the evaluation saw advocacy often carried out by protection staff, with public information and senior management involved occasionally. None of the offices have more dedicated advocacy functions, and there was also no HQ focal point or dedicated capacity support for advocacy whom staff could turn to for advice and expertise; whether in the RBE, other HQ unit or a Regional Office. For offices, support was available on the different themes being addressed by the advocacy and the overall position or messages of UNHCR, but any support on advocacy itself was ad-hoc and not part of a broader approach or plan.
34. In the Survey (responses of offices about the advocacy approaches used), offices reported that the majority (78 per cent) of their advocacy was based on a strategy with reference made to work plans, national protection strategies, regional strategies (e.g. judicial engagement) or global strategies (e.g. detention). At the same time, there were only limited examples found of advocacy plans, audience analyses and assessments of change pathways that would indicate that advocacy was designed strategically, following the steps in table 3 below, rather than being simply linked to the overall strategy of the office. This is discussed further in the next chapter. Furthermore, there was limited evidence that there was a process to assess UNHCR's relative

strength or weakness to carry out advocacy either unilaterally or in coalition - or analyze relative trade-offs and risks associated with different types of interventions.

35. As detailed in Figure 3, a sizable minority (40 per cent) answered that their advocacy was initiated from their own (national) office, which was in line with the evaluation finding also that advocacy opportunities mainly arose locally. This was also linked to the basis of their advocacy, with over half (58 per cent) indicating legal obligations followed by promising practice (32 per cent) (“Other” indicated government and partner requests/needs, gap/field analysis and UNHCR strategies/priorities) (the Survey). In discussions with Country Office staff, they explained why advocacy was often locally driven: the 2015 crisis provoked new protection and humanitarian challenges in their countries that often led to inadequate responses from authorities. This then pushed UNHCR to respond, often through advocacy, to remind authorities of their legal obligations, as the guardian of the Refugee Convention,³² and encourage humane practices. Improving practices through advocacy proved successful, as discussed in chapter 5. Examples of advocacy which were initiated at the Europe/EFTA region or global level were statelessness, family reunification and integration, according to the Country Offices (the Survey). Other themes initiated by the RBE or globally mentioned in the interviews included complementary pathways and UASC.

Figure 3: Origin and basis of advocacy

Source: Evaluation Survey findings (17 countries) (one survey response per country)



36. Advocacy was used to support a broad range of areas of work for persons of concern – refugees, stateless persons and asylum- seekers (see figure below). For some thematic areas there was advocacy reportedly carried out across all or most countries, such as for integration, determination procedures and public attitudes.³³ This is aligned with the RBE Strategic Directions 2017-2020 with one exception; public attitudes

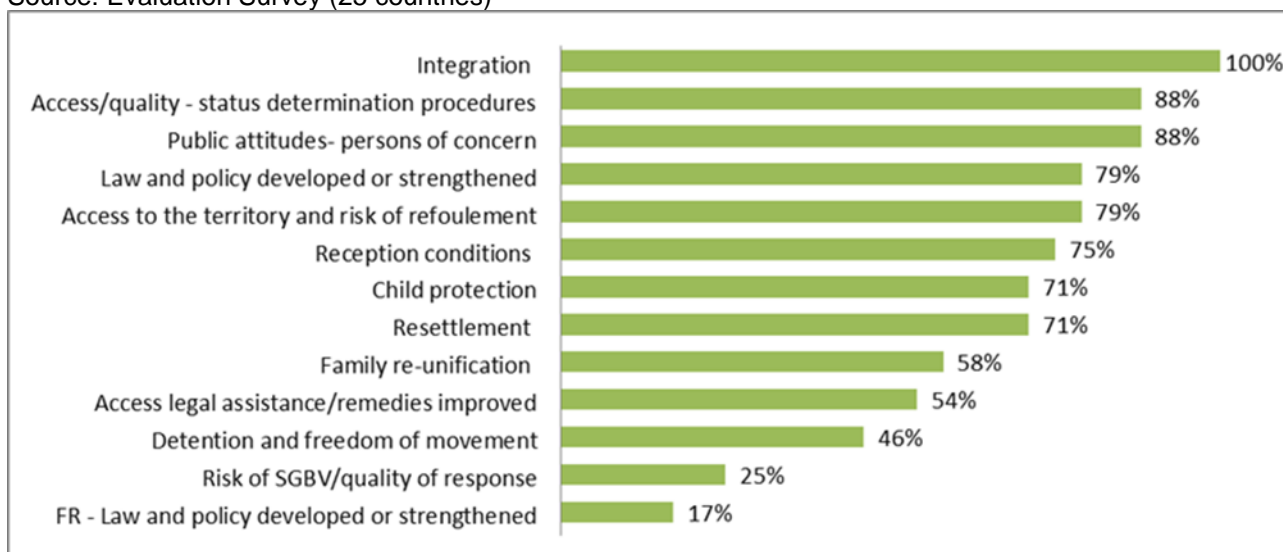
³² United Nations General Assembly, *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 28 July 1951, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, p. 137, available at: www.refworld.org/docid/3be01b964.html and 1967 Protocol.

³³ Of note, statelessness was a commonly shared advocacy area for most but it falls under another group of persons of concern.

does not feature prominently in the Strategic Directions but was informed by the Global Public Information/Communication Strategy.³⁴ During country visits, there was some feedback from staff supporting that any differences reflected adaptation of RBE's priorities to the local context. This was thought to be due mainly to the different perspectives and consequent priorities (i.e. local vs. pan-European).

Figure 4: Number of countries with planned advocacy by theme in 2015-2017 - refugees and asylum-seekers.³⁵

Source: Evaluation Survey (25 countries)



FR=Family reunification; SGBV= Sexual and gender-based violence

3.2 Audiences

37. The audiences for advocacy were relatively consistent across countries in the EU/EFTA region, as seen in the figure below (“Other” included mainly judiciary, local authorities and media) (the Survey). According to staff interviewed, the different audiences were selected based on the desired change sought – thus the featuring of government for the majority of advocacy activities given the legal and policy/practice basis of most advocacy. Often there were specific government entities as priority audiences based on the access UNHCR staff had to engage and the political orientation of the institutions, e.g. parliamentarians favourable to the organization’s positions. There was limited ability to go beyond the main or usual audiences as discussed below.
38. The inclusion of general public and its segments featured less as audiences although influencing public attitudes was a priority for the majority of offices (see previous chart). The need to segment the general public (e.g. undecided, supportive or opposing) was a response to the 2015 crisis and offices had begun to use this

³⁴ The 2015 UNHCR communication strategy is largely focused on the organization’s identity: available at www.unhcr.org/excom/standcom/559644479/unhcrs-communications-strategy.html . The strategy was under review in 2018.

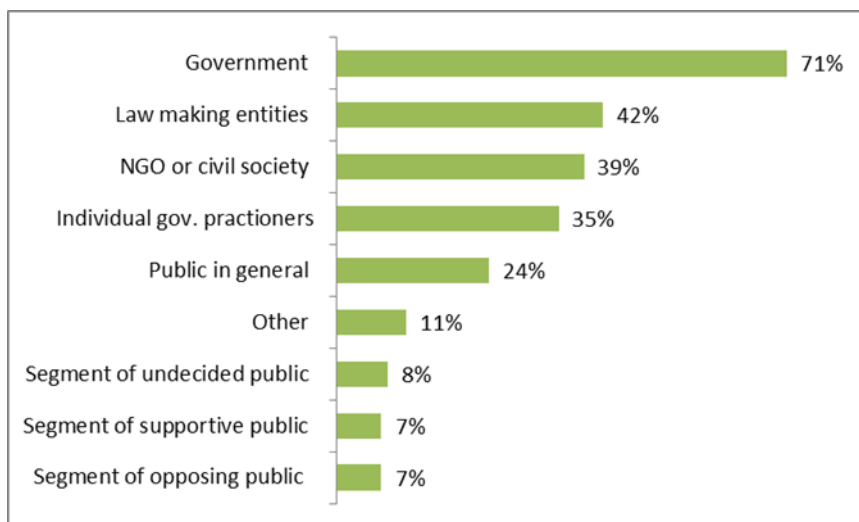
³⁵ This graph indicates the number of countries active on the given theme from 2015-17 – i.e. all 25 countries reported being active on advocacy integration; only 25 per cent reported being active on SGBV advocacy. This is for at least one year from 2015-17, and does not reflect a yearly breakdown.

approach (see case study on public opinion). As the crisis evolved, offices began to consider more closely the segmentation of audiences and their needs and differing media usage. Distinction between communications and advocacy was sometimes unclear in offices' approach as public opinion activities were sometimes part of advocacy, but often had no link to advocacy (i.e. no policy change objective).

39. A self-reflection made by many staff working on advocacy was their resource and skill set limitation to analyze fully the landscape and identify all audiences that could potentially influence a desired change, directly or indirectly. There were exceptions seen with some positive practices, such as the use of an innovation lab to facilitate an inclusive process in Sweden to develop a holistic and efficient reception procedure for UASC (see UASC case study) and the mapping and analysis by the Brussels PLUS unit of the various actors and their positions on the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Resources further impacted on using relevant partners as conduits to reaching intended audiences and offices often reported using consultants on specific advocacy tasks, e.g. for UASC advocacy in Sweden and social media campaigning/monitoring in UK. Some offices shared that they could not secure the consultants in time to deliver on a prioritized agenda therefore undermining intended efforts.

Figure 5: Audiences for individual advocacy activities*

Source: Evaluation Survey (25 countries) (*indicates number of individual advocacy activities targeting the given audience, i.e. 71 per cent of all advocacy activities across 25 countries targeted government).



3.3 Monitoring and data analysis

40. As advocacy was mainly carried out as activities by individuals, staff interviewed explained that they were monitoring their progress in relation to their own work plans, which consequently informed mid/end of year reporting. This was confirmed by the Survey where 84 per cent of advocacy activities were reported as being monitored, with explanations given confirming this approach.

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41. However, there was no centralized systematic or standard approach to monitoring and analysing advocacy results, in terms of indicators, methods, mechanisms and reporting that was present in comparable organizations (see chapter 6). Any monitoring seen was mostly ad-hoc with some exceptions seen (i.e. CEAS reform). In this regard, it was challenging for persons not implied directly in the advocacy to have an overview of progress made or for the organization to realize the successes for persons of concern, in addition to the inability to share results and encourage learning across the region or beyond. Positive examples were seen where individual staff kept tracking logs of their advocacy achievements and the monitoring of the above-mentioned advocacy on CEAS reform which was summarised in a succinct way and shared with relevant offices. The use of the Multi-Year Multi-Partner (MYMP) process, as seen in Sweden, did encourage staff to think of advocacy and other activities in a more evaluative manner, with the creation of specific objectives, indicators and monitoring plan required. This was less evident in countries using only the operations plans (known as Country Operational Plans (COPs)).
 42. Analysis of the context and persons of concern was carried out as part of operations plans, but in its current format, this plan does not require detailing of the advocacy approach or strategy. Analysis positively contributed to shaping advocacy goals, such as identifying which laws and policies needed to change. Analysis was limited in reflecting on all possible tactics, audiences and pathways to change. Analysis was also used less in designing public opinion influencing; activities were launched to influence opinions without a thorough analysis of the existing public opinions and formulation of the desired change. No written guidance or strategy was found in this respect. Outside of the operational plans, there were positive examples seen in the area of monitoring public opinion projects, such as the punctual reports carried out by the Strategic Communications Section.³⁶ At the same time, if the pathway to change was not thought through, the monitoring could also be off-target and capturing interesting but not decision supporting information. A research project was launched in 2017 (“the Purpose” research) to understand better public opinions in some countries although it is yet to be fully used. (See case study on public opinion).

3.4 Conclusions

43. Advocacy is fundamental for achieving UNHCR’s protection goals in the region. The organization uses advocacy to seek change across many areas, which became even more pertinent with the 2015 crisis. Referring back to the definition used earlier, that “advocacy is a strategic process that involves analysis, planning and action”; this evaluation found that advocacy was less of a strategic process and more of a tactical response – action with limited planning or analysis. Considering good practices for impactful advocacy and based on feedback from stakeholders, this is one reason the evaluation finds that advocacy is not reaching its potential to support the organization in reaching its protection goals. The planning and reporting in place does not support a more comprehensive strategic approach for advocacy as seen also in the limited monitoring and analysis. This is unfortunate, as much of the positive achievements seen (detailed in chapter 5) remain largely unknown outside of the given country or region and are difficult to learn from or use for

³⁶ See for example, Strategic Communications Section (2018) “The Dream Diaries”, UNHCR Communications Report. Results and Findings. Internal document.

prioritization. The inclusion of general public and its segments featured less as audiences although influencing public attitudes was a priority for the majority of offices (see previous chart). The need to segment the general public (e.g. undecided, supportive or opposing) was a response to the 2015 crisis and offices had begun to use this approach (see case study on public opinion). As the crisis evolved, offices began to consider more closely the segmentation of audiences and their needs and differing media usage. Distinction between communications and advocacy was sometimes unclear in offices' approach as public opinion activities were sometimes part of advocacy, but often had no link to advocacy (i.e. no policy change objective).

4. Relevance and appropriateness

What were the assumptions underpinning the advocacy approaches?

Key Findings

Advocacy was carried out based on a set of high-level (often implicit) assumptions that held true in some situations and in others not: that UNHCR would have access in order to influence; that a single advocacy tactic alone would be sufficient; that advocacy required little follow-up; that a strategic facilitation role for UNHCR would occur; and that change would occur in a certain manner. Coherence was an issue in understanding how all advocacy activities fitted together in the absence of documented strategies and plans; staff, partners and authorities did not always understand UNHCR's positions.

The resources used in the region grew six-fold from 2014 to 2018 with advocacy output expenditure nearly doubling. Nonetheless, staff spoke of limited time and budgets available for advocacy. Although advocacy needs had grown significantly, expenditure was not commensurate with these needs. Until 2017, expenditure on activities related to public attitudes grew more than expenditures for advocacy activities.

44. This chapter discusses the assumptions about the advocacy carried out and the coherence, consistencies and relevance of their delivery. The usage of the necessary elements of the advocacy strategy are reviewed. The chapter concludes by assessing the resources that were available for advocacy.

4.1 Assumptions

45. As a response to the 2015 crisis, the evaluation found that advocacy was carried out based on a set of high-level assumptions that reflected UNHCR's approach to past advocacy in Europe and elsewhere. In order to assess the relevance of the advocacy approaches, analysing the assumptions underpinning them was a key question for the evaluation to respond to and is based on the document review, survey and interviews. The main assumptions identified held true in some situations, and in other situations not, as discussed below:

- **Access:** There was an assumption that UNHCR will have access to decision-makers in order to influence law, policies and practices in the region. In the six countries visited this did prove to be the case, where UNHCR had direct access to stakeholders without major obstacles, thanks to its reputation and expertise in the area. However, UNHCR tended to seek access to those groups it was comfortable working with, whether they be authorities, politicians, media or civil society. In some instances, to bring about the change desired, UNHCR would have needed access to some difficult-to-reach groups, such as conservative media. Despite trying (e.g. in Austria and UK), such media proved difficult to engage with given the mandate and identity of UNHCR.
- **Tactics:** To some extent, there were assumptions made about tactics and their ability to bring about change. As the advocacy was largely carried out as individual tasks, there were less opportunities to discuss amongst colleagues and consider the full range of tactics possible. In some cases, the assumption that a given tactic alone would be enough, turned out to be correct, in other cases, it was not. The MYMP process was an example where staff as a team did have an opportunity to consider an issue more holistically and consider a range of tactics. Tactics around communication were often confined to social media or events raising awareness following historic precedent. Tactics were not always evidence-based with regards to reaching desired audiences and an assessment made as to; a) whether the design of interventions were appropriate for UNHCR involvement; b) which actors UNHCR could leverage or work with as conduits to deliver

messages more appropriately and c) which platforms' audiences were receiving information from beyond the obvious. This may have been done informally by staff but it was not documented.

- **Follow-up:** Where UNHCR did produce a comprehensive position on an issue, such as the “Way Forward” Roadmap for UASC, the evaluation found there was an implicit assumption that once the report was published, the advocacy was largely achieved and would be followed through by offices. Staff involved in UASC advocacy indicated that what was lacking was an advocacy plan, guidance and follow-up on its implementation. This assumption of using advocacy based on events (such as report launch or workshop) with limited follow-up or strategizing was seen elsewhere, for example in Sweden with the research reports “This is who we are” on UASC profiling. Momentum was lost due to the absence of an advocacy plan, lack of monitoring and staff rotation according to staff interviewed (leading to priorities changing and loss of knowledge given lack of written plans). Positive examples were also seen where UNHCR did follow through on its initial advocacy action, such as complementary pathways in Ireland, where a first conference in 2016 was followed by a series of coordinated actions.
- **Internal and external capacity:** Where UNHCR did advocate for core issues such as resettlement, there was an assumption that the organization could also play a strategic facilitation role in their implementation. There were examples of where this assumption did not prove correct in supporting advocacy. For example where the organization could not deliver on the processing of cases outside of Europe for different pathways or support States in doing so to meet quotas, the advocacy space was affected. Another example seen was advocating for government action without sufficient assessment of the ability and/or political will of the government to deliver.
- **Bringing about change:** UNHCR made assumptions about how advocacy would contribute to bring about change. In some cases where the change sought was closer to UNHCR’s mandate, such as influencing reception practices for UASC or family reunification policies, the assumptions made were shown to be correct. In some of the work to influence public attitudes, the activities were found to be based on assumptions as to how communications should work that run counter to established communication theory and studies in the area, as detailed in the highlight box below.

Box 3: Assumptions in influencing public attitude towards persons of concern

Based on a review of available literature and studies concerning influencing public opinions on refugees and asylum-seekers, the following assumptions can be challenged:

Flooding the market with “good news” works: A 1947 study was possibly the first to indicate that increasing the flow of good information does not necessarily change attitudes (Hyman & Sheatsley, 1947). Consequent studies have found that distributing good news may serve publics already favourable to the issue but not necessarily influence those unfavourable (Crawley, 2009; Dempster & Hargrave, 2017).

The facts will stand: Understandably organizations such as UNHCR want to counter misconceptions and wrong information about refugee movements by communicating the correct information and facts. However, studies show that facts alone are not sufficient to influence attitudes; people do not necessarily change their initial misconceptions when presented with the facts and that they can ignore them. Using emotive and value-driven arguments have been found to work better to influence attitudes when delivered by an appropriate messenger (Crawley, 2009; Dempster & Hargrave, 2017).

Profiling persons of concern in a positive way works: Profiling the contribution of refugees to society is a large part of many pro-refugee communications. This may reinforce attitudes amongst supportive audiences but studies have found that it can also polarise non-supportive publics increasing unfavourable perspectives to persons of concern. The parallel is made to how anti-racist campaigning can actually increase racist attitudes amongst undecided audiences (Crawley, 2009). Studies show the need for communications to acknowledge the difficulties and grievances of these publics and works better when delivered by a messenger they can relate to (Crawley, 2009; Dempster & Hargrave, 2017).

UNHCR is the right messenger: There is an assumption that UNHCR should be the messenger to influence public attitudes on refugee matters. Studies have shown that organizations such as United Nations bodies and NGOs are considered as “elites” by publics; more so media personalities or “regular” people who have welcomed and work with refugees may be better placed as messengers (Dempster & Hargrave, 2017).

You can reach audiences with minimal resources and one-off research: Social media campaigns intended to be strategic require significant resources and technical capability to analyse who the audiences are, where they consume media (it may not be obvious platforms such as Facebook) and what echo chambers exist around them to further influence or exploit grievances (Dempster & Hargrave, 2017; RAN, 2015).

Some publics have inherently negative attitudes to persons of concern: While it is known that there is a distinction between those favourable, unfavourable or undecided concerning refugees and migrants, studies have shown some favourable attitudes are common across all publics in Europe – such as sympathy for persons of concern who have faced persecution and are particularly vulnerable (e.g. UASC or torture victims) (Bansak et al, 2016).

4.2 Consistency, coherence and relevance

46. Advocacy activities were found to be clear and consistent when carried out as individual tasks. In the six countries visited, staff carrying out advocacy activities were clear about what they had to do, when and for what purpose. Coherence was more challenging when trying to understand how all these activities fitted together towards a common goal. For some staff, they saw a clear coherence in the work of their Country Offices which was not however evident to this evaluation based on documents reviewed and persons interviewed. The lack of documented strategies or plans contributed to this situation as discussed below. For example, in Greece, through a range of activities, the office has progressed considerably on advocating for UASC (see next chapter and case study). However, the Greece COP from 2015 to 2018 does not adequately explain the advocacy plans and achievements, nor does any other document provided.
47. An issue of coherence raised by both partners and authorities was that they did not always understand what UNHCR’s position was and what the organization wanted to achieve. Partners were appreciative of the work and support provided by UNHCR but there was some concern about the reluctance of the organization to share their advocacy plans and strategies in common areas of interest. This contributed to partners sometimes having an incomplete view of what UNHCR wanted to do and achieve. Partners also commented that UNHCR was not able to provide clarity on positions in a timely manner because of the need for multi-layered and centralized clearance process thereby making their in-country proactive advocacy less effective.
48. Staff in countries visited highlighted the challenges they faced in advocating for an area where the position of UNHCR was not known or clear to them. Child protection was highlighted positively in this respect with the “Way Forward” roadmap³⁷ providing guidance and a position; family reunification was given as an example where a position was lacking. To respond to the evolving situation, the RBE also produced a series of “If

³⁷ UNHCR (July 2017), *The Way Forward to Strengthened Policies and Practices for unaccompanied and separated refugee and migrant children in Europe*.

asked” notes³⁸ on how to respond to the current issues, which were often used by offices in support of advocacy where other advocacy tools were absent. According to HQ staff, the rapidly changing context in the region meant it was challenging to have up-to-date positions. Contradictory messaging was mentioned concerning resettlement and complementary pathways in the early days of the crisis (with UNHCR still largely focused on resettlement) and later on regional disembarkation platforms. The 2017 emergency response review of the Europe crisis³⁹ identified as a good practice that when UNHCR had clear policy positions, it did influence policy and operational approaches that benefited persons of concern.

49. Advocacy was seen as being very relevant as one of the key responses to the 2015 crisis, and the related protection issues, as seen by its integration with virtually all protection goals (see figure 3). In most cases, the advocacy tactics used were relevant and appropriate to the change being sought. There were examples seen where staff and partners questioned the use (or non-use) of advocacy tactics. An example mentioned in several contexts by partners and staff was the underuse of strategic litigation. It was seen as being very efficient in its possibility to bring about change, i.e. if successful it would set the precedent for similar cases and provoke policy and possibly legislative change. However, some partners and staff provided examples where they thought strategic litigation would have been an appropriate tactic but was not retained by UNHCR based on operational risks considerations for UNHCR and possible negative outcomes on persons of concern in different parts of the world. Influencing public attitudes was another area where issues of relevance were raised, in particular questions were raised as to whether UNHCR was prepared, had sufficient expertise and organizational knowledge and/or best placed to engage to influence (see case study). As described below, significant budgets were allocated to influencing public attitudes even if it wasn't a stated focus of the RBE Strategic Directions 2017-2020, as noted above in paragraph 36.

4.3 Strategy elements

50. As advocacy was carried out mainly as a set of individual activities, there was limited use of the necessary elements of an advocacy strategy, as seen in the table below. Comparable organizations used these elements in their planning and advocacy (see Chapter 6). These elements could exist to a certain extent in different documents, such as policy environment analysis in the COPs (in the Situation and Problem Assessment descriptions) but they were not necessarily focused on advocacy and collated in a central strategy or plan. Examples were seen where offices had created advocacy strategies and plans, such as the above-mentioned CEAS advocacy plan and national level strategies created by Bulgaria, Poland (being finalised), Romania (focus on detention) and UK (on advocacy and communications). The “Better Protecting Refugees” report triggered a series of advocacy actions and tools coordinated by the Brussels PLUS unit across Europe

³⁸ *The title sends a message in itself to staff – not to communicate but only “If asked”.*

³⁹ *DESS/RBE (2017). Op. Cit.*

including the CEAS advocacy plan,⁴⁰ although no advocacy strategy or plan was found explaining the roll-out, linkages and follow-up of the report. While thematic/operational global and regional strategies existed on some themes (e.g. detention) as described above, no advocacy strategies or plans to accompany such strategies were found.

Table 3: Usage of key elements of advocacy strategy

Source: Evaluation Team's own analysis⁴¹

Elements of advocacy strategy	Usage by UNHCR operations (as analysed in the context of the evaluation – 25 countries – Survey respondents):
Policy environment analysis	An analysis of the legal and policy situation was often found within COPs but split between persons of concern and not from an advocacy perspective. Where there were national advocacy strategies (e.g. Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, UK) they did contain brief analyses. MYMP does provide better possibilities for policy analysis.
Audience analysis	Audiences (such as the “conflicted middle”) to reach were mentioned in the COPs but not systematically described, analysed or prioritized. Some offices had carried out separate audience analyses, as seen with Bulgaria’s stakeholder mapping and for public opinion through research providing insights into the undecided groups regarding refugees.
Intended interim and long-term outcomes	Some advocacy interim and long-term outcomes were mentioned in the COPs. For example, a COP may set broad goals (in Prioritized Operational Results), such as “Advocate for the rights of stateless persons” and then detail a little further, e.g. in Germany, “residence permit for stateless persons lobbied for”. (2015 COP RR Brussels). However, they were not collated and compared to the activities carried out, and did not cover all the intended outcomes. The advocacy strategies seen did describe more comprehensively this element. The MYMP process reflected a longer term trajectory to goals.
Theory of change or explicit logic flow	Any use of theories of change or logic flows was limited. Some advocacy strategies did explain how change was expected to occur (e.g. UK) but it remained largely undocumented. Some offices with a more accommodating environment to refugees struggled to think about contingency planning or intended strategic change.
Key messages	Messages were not systematically set down, informed by audience analysis or available as described above. Some advocacy strategies did detail messages (e.g. Romania) while the COP did not include this element.
Activity plan	The activity plans were limited to the descriptions found in the COPs, in the advocacy strategies and the work plans of individuals.
Monitoring tracking	As detailed above, monitoring was carried out mainly for the mid/end year reporting. No systematic or standard approach to monitoring and analysing advocacy results was found.

4.4 Resources

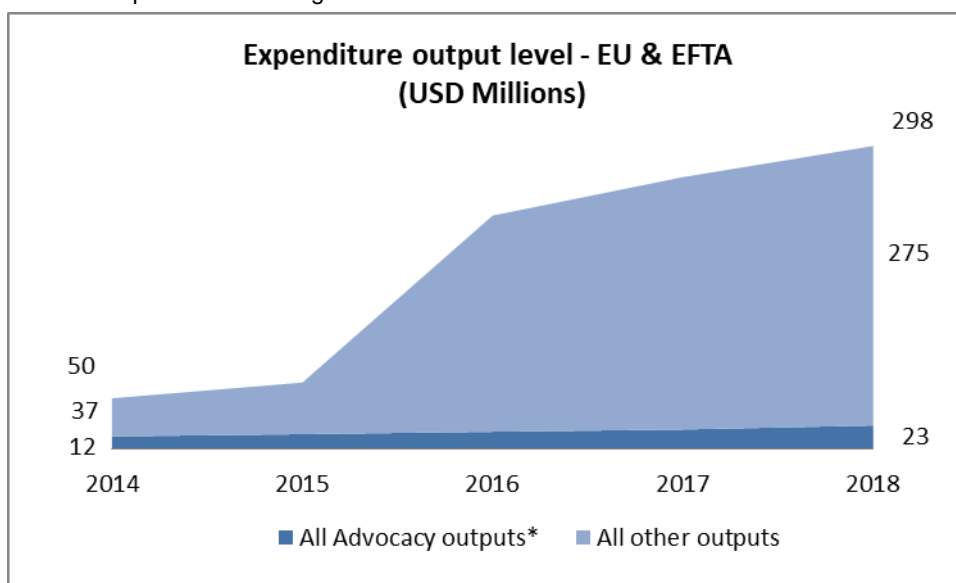
⁴⁰ Advocacy tools included “Follow the Money - Assessing the use of European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) funding at the national level” (2018); and “Fair and Fast: UNHCR Discussion Paper on Accelerated and Simplified Procedures in the European Union” (2018).

⁴¹ Coffman, J. & Beer, T., (2015), *The Advocacy Strategy Framework*. Centre for Evaluation Innovation; UNICEF (2010), *Advocacy Toolkit*.

51. In response to the 2015 crisis, the resources used in the EU/EFTA region grew six-fold: for expenditures, from USD 50 million in 2014 to 298 million in 2018, as can be seen in the chart below. During those activities described in COPs as advocacy-related expenditures nearly doubled from 12 million to 23 million. The evaluation found some consistency challenges with how advocacy expenditures are recorded and calculated, which makes detailed analysis difficult. These issues with analysis of advocacy expenditures further supports the broader findings in the evaluation regarding weaknesses with strategic planning and resource allocation for advocacy. While it is true that advocacy resources do not necessarily need to grow in proportion to increases in expenditure, the graph below illustrates how the trend of incremental resource allocations to advocacy during the crisis correspond to a proportionate decrease in advocacy expenditure as a percentage of overall expenditure.
52. As such, the advocacy output accounted for 25 per cent of all expenses in 2014 and decreased to 8 per cent in 2018. The main growth in advocacy expenditure was seen in Greece, Italy, Brussels and central European countries. In UK, Germany, and Northern European countries (Stockholm and region) advocacy expenditure grew only slightly from 2014 to 2018.

Figure 6: Expenditure: 2014-2018: Advocacy vs. all other outputs – EU/EFTA region

Source: UNHCR operational expenditure tracking

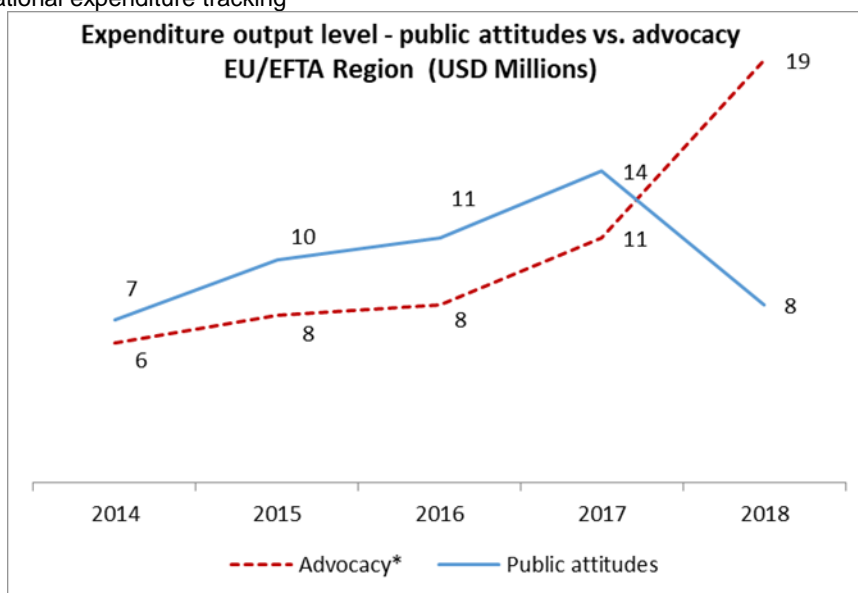


*includes advocacy outputs as part of public attitudes work

53. A comparison between the two main expenditure areas to influence advocacy audiences and the public; namely total expenditure on advocacy outputs for all objectives (excluding public attitude objectives) and expenditure for the public attitude objectives in the EU/EFTA region, illustrates a gradual growth of advocacy in general and a more marked growth in efforts to address public attitudes until 2017, as seen in the chart below. Staff have explained that advocacy budgets could contain activities that were not strictly speaking advocacy, such as training for authorities. In 2018, the expenditure on efforts to change public attitudes was approximately halved from 2017, ostensibly due to reallocation for operational needs rather than any drastic change in the situation.

Figure 7: Expenditure: 2014-2018: public attitudes objectives in relation to advocacy across all other objectives EU/EFTA region (millions USD)

Source: UNHCR operational expenditure tracking



*advocacy does not include advocacy outputs as part of public attitudes work – this is included in public attitudes calculation.

54. Given the modalities for budgeting and tracking advocacy expenditures and the lack of monitoring carried out, there were limited analyses possible to understand where resources would be best used to achieve the results. For example, it was not possible to assess the value and results of one tactic against another, such as public campaigning verses strategic litigation; or at a higher level, to compare the efficiency of quality initiatives to advocacy, in reaching a common goal, i.e. greater compliance to the Refugee Convention.

55. Staff costs in the region nearly doubled from USD 25 million in 2014 to 47 million in 2018. It is not possible to determine the staff-time used for working on advocacy in isolation and the associated costs, however staff cost for Public Information/External Relation/Information Management/Donor Relation staff grew from USD 3.9 million in 2014 to 6.7 million in 2018. As described above, in the offices visited, advocacy was largely carried out by protection staff sometimes with the involvement of PI staff and management. Activities focused on influencing public attitudes were led by PI staff. Brussels PLUS unit was staffed by policy staff whose work contained a considerable element of advocacy work. Staff in all offices spoke of limited resources in terms of their time and budgets available for advocacy. The protection staff, combining advocacy and protection tasks, had learnt advocacy skills mainly “on the job” with a concern they expressed being the lack of advocacy training and guidance available to them. This was also confirmed by the findings of the GLC/DIP survey. All offices visited had the advantage of national staff that had been in place for some time and therefore knew the context and influencing possibilities (and limits) when the crisis hit. The 2017 emergency response review spoke of staff lacking the tools to address the negative attitudes of publics they faced.

4.5 Conclusions

56. With the 2015 crisis, UNHCR was obliged to step up its advocacy based on the assumption that it would have access and influence. The evaluation found that UNHCR had both the access and influence required in the majority of situations. The positions and messages of advocacy were not always clear or consistent. Advocacy resources increased incrementally but were not commensurate with the advocacy aims and needs, and not informed by a well-developed and researched strategy. Influencing public attitudes grew markedly but the organization's ability to carry out such activities in a strategic manner is questionable as discussed in the next chapter. Existing planning and budget tools did not support strategic advocacy approaches, monitoring and prioritization as some of the distinctions were not clear, nor do they reflect the actual level of effort. One coping strategy for the limited resources was to rely on the know-how, language and access of key long-standing national staff. This had the advantage of ensuring the continuity of the advocacy but the disadvantage in some cases that advocacy remained the responsibility of individual staff rather than a team responsibility.

5. Effectiveness and Impact

How effective have selected UNHCR advocacy strategies been in supporting progress towards specific outcomes?

Key Findings

In six countries visited, and looking at the themes explored in each country, 25 instances were identified where UNHCR's advocacy had contributed to progress towards specific outcomes (see also table 1 and annex 4), such as the introduction of new programmes or laws; changes to policies and practices or piloting of new approaches; and influencing public attitudes towards persons of concern. Where change was significant, a selection of multiple tactics were used and a combination of direct and indirect advocacy. Advocacy often provoked incremental rather than systemic change.

Both internal and external factors of influence were identified that could both impede or enable advocacy. Insufficient design of the advocacy intervention was the main internal impediment and political context the main external impediment. Timeliness (i.e. being able to respond on time) was the major internal enabler and access as well as a supportive civil society the main external enablers. The role of the RBE and the HQ appear to be limited in developing and carrying out advocacy but this role depended upon the objective, level of change desired and access required. The evaluation found a general lack of coordination and sharing on advocacy experiences between countries, regional offices and HQ.

57. This chapter discusses the effectiveness and impact of UNHCR's advocacy with particular reference to the six countries visited. The factors of influence, both internally and externally, enabling and impeding are described and analysed. The roles of the RBE and HQ are also discussed.

5.1 Specific outcomes

58. In the six countries visited and in the three case study themes, this evaluation identified 25 instances where UNHCR's advocacy had contributed to progress towards specific outcomes (refer to annex 4 of the summarized contribution analysis listing each instance).⁴² Instances were found to be of high or medium significance that benefited persons of concern as follows:

- **High significance (5):** Introduction of new programmes or laws, such as establishment of community sponsorship programme in Ireland, resettlement programme in Germany or introduction of a new guardianship law in Greece. In these five instances, the contribution of UNHCR was assessed as high, based on the data and information available.⁴³
- **Medium significance (10):** Changes to policies and practices for refugees and asylum- seekers, such as modifying the age assessment or minor status made on initial arrival in Greece; modifying the practice of charging for the DNA assessment for family reunion in Austria; the piloting of improvements to UASC reception process in Sweden or semi-independent living (SIL) in Greece. These were considered of medium significance as they were often involved piloting of new practices or modifying practices in one

⁴² The evaluation only looked at one theme per country and thus other high significant advocacy outcomes in other areas have not been captured. The evaluation did not aim to capture the entirety of UNHCR's advocacy work in EU/EFTA region, but to illustrate trends in advocacy approaches through specific case studies.

⁴³ Such as confirmation in interviews from authorities and partners and availability of supporting documentation.

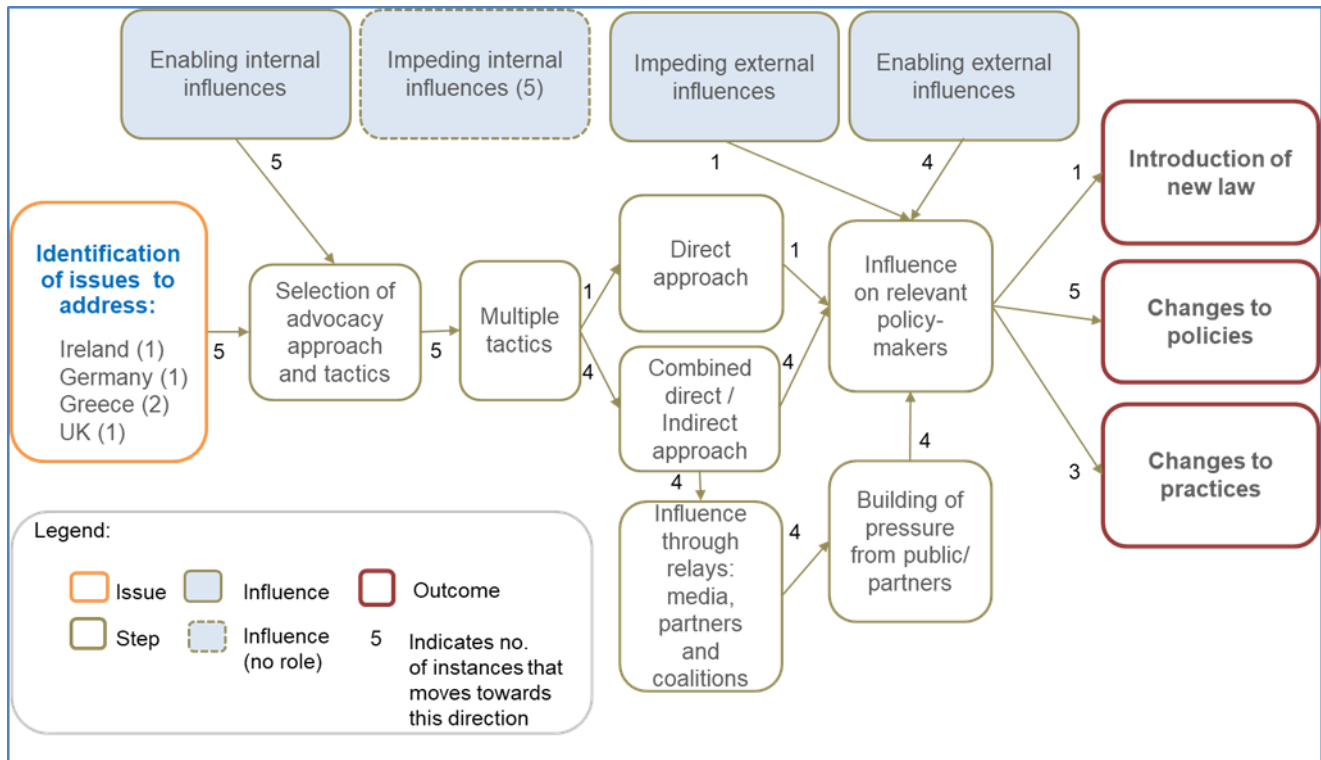
location or for a limited group of persons of concern, e.g. UASC seeking to stay in Greece (option of SIL). In most instances, the contribution of UNHCR was assessed as being high or medium (often other actors involved in contributing to the change when medium).

- **Medium significance – public opinion (10):** Influencing public opinion and attitudes towards persons of concern, such as imposing a detention time limit in the UK through public pressure on parliamentarians; profiling family reunification positively in the media in Ireland; or influencing attitudes of school students in Austria. In many of these instances, the strength of evidence was low given the lack of monitoring data on the impact of such public opinion projects on the given publics (it was found feasible to collect such data but it was not available). Therefore, impact could have been higher but it was not possible to know.

59. The following chart illustrates a simplified pathway of change through advocacy for the five instances assessed as of high significance. The numbers next to the arrows indicate the number of instances that advanced in this manner. The chart shows how advocacy progressed from identification of issues, to selection of tactics and their implementation, to influencing policy-makers and eventual changes to laws, policies and practices. The chart illustrates there was five instances in four countries that resulted in nine eventual changes to law (1), policies (5) and practices (3).
60. In all five instances, a selection of multiple tactics were used and in four of five instances, a combination of direct and indirect advocacy approaches were used. Indirect approaches meant working through relays (e.g. media, partners and coalitions) to build pressure and influence on policy-makers to bring about change. Both internal and external factors of influence were identified. In these instances, the internal influences were all positive and only one negative external influence identified in one instance, i.e. the policy environment in Greece, although positive in general, was slow in the pace of change that could be expected. These influences are discussed further below.

Figure 8: Simplified pathway of change through advocacy for five instances of high significance

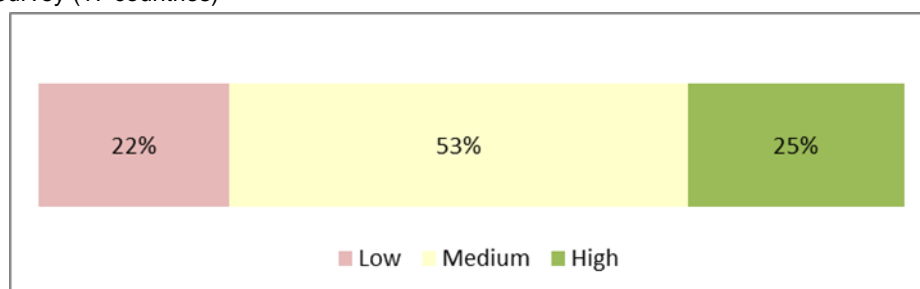
Source: Evaluation



61. An analysis of the 25 instances illustrates that the majority (15 out of 25) were incremental changes, often at the level of practices and policies beneath a legislative threshold. This was a strategic choice to focus on influence at this level, given the political climate in countries where legislative change would have been challenging to aim for. As advocacy often was a series of individual tactics, there were no examples where systemic change could be pointed to. This was the ambition for some advocacy, for example in Greece and Sweden, where holistic change to UASC policies and processes was sought. In both countries this was yet to be achieved; more so aspects of it were progressing.
62. In assessing their own level of success in the region (the Survey), countries estimated some half of the results they had seen “medium” results (53 per cent) and split between “low” and “high”. Countries assessed that they were most successful in their advocacy on resettlement and family reunification and least successful in their advocacy on integration, detention and SGBV. Explanations provided by staff indicated that they assessed success as being where they had seen concrete changes to practices and policies. For example, many countries could point towards changes in policies on family reunification; less progress was seen on integration in their opinion.

Figure 9: Self-estimation of significance of results from advocacy activities

Source: Evaluation Survey (17 countries)



5.2 Factors of influence

63. Factors of influence were identified which impacted on the effectiveness of the advocacy carried out. Factors could be both enabling or impeding the advocacy, dependent upon the situation and could be as such for the same instance. Factors were both external, outside the control of UNHCR and internal, within the control of UNHCR. The following table describes and analyses the main factors identified and indicates how often they were present in the above-mentioned 25 instances.

Table 4: Factors of influence: internal/external; enabling/hindering

Source: evaluation

Factor	Explanation	Enabling / impeding (no. found – out of 25)	Analysis
Internal factors:			
Advocacy design	Analysis and setting out of objectives, targets, activities, etc.	Enabling (20)	The advocacy design supports the tactics in reaching their goal with objectives and targets set out.
		Impeding (7)	The advocacy design was lacking the definition of objectives and target audiences in addition to other strategy elements (see table 3). This was often the case for the instances examined on public attitudes; insufficient emphasis was placed on designing activities that were feasible and measurable.
Positioning available	The position of UNHCR on a given issue or situation.	Enabling (22)	A clear positioning facilitated the advocacy carried out.
		Impeding (4)	Where a position was not clear or not existing, it impeded the advocacy and the staff involved were less able to progress, for example, in some areas for complementary pathways, such as family reunion.
Resources	Budget and staff available.	Enabling (18)	Staff and budgets sufficient to carry out the advocacy; which was the case in most instances found.
		Impeding (7)	In the instances where resources were assessed as being impeding, these were either all public opinion projects where resources were not available for the monitoring and evaluation necessary or where additional budgets could have opened up potentially more collaboration with partners.

Know-how	Practical knowledge or skills.	Enabling (24)	In nearly all instances, the UNHCR staff or partners possessed the know-how in the subject matter, context and audiences that supported reaching the advocacy's goals.
		Impeding (4)	In these instances, all public opinion projects, there was a lack of know-how on what was feasible for specific outcomes and how monitoring and evaluation could be done.
Timeliness	Ability to react in a timely fashion.	Enabling (25)	For all instances, UNHCR was able to react in a timely fashion that supported reaching its advocacy goals.
		Impeding (0)	Although partners and some stakeholders did comment on the slowness of UNHCR to respond on joint advocacy, no instances in the three case studies were identified where it was a major impediment.
External factors:			
Political context	The environment within which the advocacy operates.	Enabling (15)	Where the politicians, their party and supporters were generally "pro-refugee", this supported UNHCR in achieving its advocacy goals.
		Impeding (14)	Where the political context as not "pro-refugee", i.e. the dominant political party, it could impede advocacy considerably, most notably at the political level, such as passing legislation through parliament and the "knock-on" effect on public opinion.
Access	Possibility to have contact with a given audience.	Enabling (25)	In all instances identified, UNHCR had the access required to carry out its advocacy, which facilitated its work and consequent progress seen.
		Impeding (2)	Two instances of public opinion projects were identified where access to conservative media could have facilitated greater reach to desired audiences, but access was not possible or difficult.
Supportive civil society	The level of support of civil society.	Enabling (25)	In all instances identified, civil society was supportive to UNHCR in its advocacy goals, with more implication in some instances where they had common interests, i.e. family reunion or resettlement.
		Impeding (0)	No instances were identified where civil society impeded UNHCR's advocacy. Some civil society representatives did disagree with UNHCR's positions and/or sought more implication or support from them, although these were not seen as major impediments.
Policy environment	The openness of the policy-makers and partners to discussion and input.	Enabling (20)	In these instances, the policy-makers were supportive to UNHCR and the environment was open to dialogue and discussion; partners also had an interest in the policy area.
		Impeding (12)	In these instances, the policy environment could have impeded the advocacy for several reasons; capacity and slowness of policy-makers to respond and engage; political climate that limited the possibility for policy-makers to engage; lack of interest or support from partners; lack of relevance of the advocacy to the priorities of the policy environment.

5.3 Roles

64. As seen in figure 3, 40 per cent of advocacy was initiated by National Offices with lesser contributions from Regional Offices, the RBE and HQ. This implies that the role of the RBE and the HQ was limited in developing and carrying out advocacy, often considering the context specific nature of the advocacy. However, this largely depended upon the objective, level of change desired and access required according to staff interviewed. For example, high-level negotiations with European Union institutions were managed by the Brussels office and the HQ; whereas, discussion on changes to practices and policies on reception processes were handled by Country Offices, and mostly by protection staff.
65. There were certain advocacy actions and public opinion projects where the RBE was more involved, for example, advocacy around child protection, the “Way Forward” report, the “Dream Diaries” project and the cross-European “No stranger place” photo exhibition. The RBE was also heavily involved in coordinating a media response to the 2015 crisis. The RBE and HQ were perceived by field staff to be setting priorities on key issues such as public opinion or integration with offices encouraged to follow suit. Other units within HQ, notably DIP, were also involved in supporting advocacy at the national level, mostly in terms of guidance on UNHCR’s policies and positions on issues. The Division of External Relations (DER) led on the global communication approach for the organization as a whole and in particular for support of public opinion activities and private sector fundraising. The Brussels PLUS unit was also active coordinating European-level policy advocacy responses with Country Offices, for example on advocacy on the “Better Protecting Refugees” report, such as the CEAS process, as described above.
66. As discussed above, there was a lack of coordination and sharing on advocacy between countries, according to staff interviewed. For example, staff working on UASC in Sweden may not have a clear idea or know-how to access to information on what was being done for UASC in Greece. They were more likely to know what was occurring in neighbouring countries but not necessarily in countries further away, although all were interlinked in the UASC passage through Europe. This was similar to staff working on public opinion that although despite regular contacts there was little evidence of formalized planning or information sharing of trends. A more audience-focused approach was started as early as 2015 for public opinion but progressed slowly given resource limitations, according to staff interviewed. Complementary pathways did seek to explore cross border opportunities to a greater degree. On a state-to-state level there was limited impact given the cultural and linguistic limitations but opportunities through the European Union could have been exploited further. According to staff, the lack of coordination and sharing on advocacy was due to a combination of issues: absence of focal points in RBE and/or HQ for most thematic areas; absence of advocacy focal points in Country Offices; a limited knowledge sharing system; and limited face-to-face meetings of staff working on the same issues in the EU/EFTA region.

5.4 Conclusions

67. Positively this evaluation could identify instances in all countries visited where UNHCR's advocacy had contributed to changes of policy, practices, law and public opinion. These instances indicated that progress was made where multiple tactics using indirect and direct approaches were used. Tactics used included lobbying meetings, direct commentary on policies/law and working with partners. Progress was mostly seen in an incremental manner at the policy and practice level; although systemic change was a goal that remained to be achieved given the longer time frame needed. External and internal influences could support progress and where UNHCR could itself control better was in positioning the organization and in design of its advocacy, notably for public opinion projects, from their feasibility to selection of tactic and partners to their monitoring and evaluation. Achievements were also seen despite the challenging political context in some countries. Most advocacy was initiated by UNHCR Country Offices and coordination and the role of the RBE and HQ differed, depending upon the issue and level of change desired. Public opinion activities became more audience-focused but progressed slowly given resource limitations.

6. Lessons

Which lessons can be learned from UNHCR advocacy and communication strategies and approaches moving forward?

Key Findings

Lessons drawn from three global organizations illustrate that they have HQ-based expertise and staff with advocacy roles and responsibilities at the country-level, using communities of practice for learning and strategizing. Organizations have aligned their advocacy with their organizational strategic goals and have tools, guidance and monitoring and evaluation as support. All organizations recruit staff with advocacy specific skillsets. Lessons drawn from the three case studies highlighted the importance of clear priorities and advocacy strategy design. The longer timeframe needed was emphasised as was the need for local knowledge. Advocacy was found to bring gradual changes, combining direct and indirect advocacy, public and private. Communications could support specific advocacy objectives while it is more difficult to achieve change of public opinion alone.

68. This chapter aims to draw out and distil the lessons both from three comparable organizations and the three case studies of the evaluation.

6.1 Lessons from global organizations active in advocacy

69. Based on publicly available documentation,⁴⁴ a comparative analysis of three other global organizations, UNICEF, Oxfam and Amnesty international, highlighted the following lessons:

LESSON ONE: All organizations have HQ-based expertise to support advocacy globally.

70. All three organizations had HQ-based staff that were specialised in advocacy to support both HQ and field-led initiatives. UNICEF has a Policy Advocacy Unit and Oxfam has a Campaigns and Advocacy Unit (advocacy expertise within Oxfam is not only in its International HQ but spread throughout its major section HQs, such as UK, the Netherlands, Australia, etc.). Amnesty International HQ has an International Advocacy Programme although the organization emphasises that all of Amnesty's work is focused on advocacy to a great degree. The organizations also dedicate resources to policy analysis and advocacy strategic planning. For example, Oxfam has policy experts whose role is to support advocacy, campaigning and operational staff with policy analysis and positions in order to engage with authorities and other stakeholders.

LESSON TWO: Organizations have a mix of advocacy roles/responsibilities at the country level.

71. Within UNICEF, the advocacy role is integrated within programme staff. Within Oxfam, there are both advocacy staff servicing global and local advocacy priorities in Country Offices and advocacy staff integrated within larger programmes (or a combination); in Amnesty International, its core role is campaigning and advocacy so all posts have some advocacy aspect integrated. All organizations recruit staff with advocacy specific skillsets and continue to bring in new expertise to serve policy needs.

LESSON THREE: All organizations have communities of practice on advocacy or advocacy themes that cut across structures, regions and countries.

⁴⁴ Including: Amnesty International (2016), *Impact and Learning System*; UNICEF (2010), *Advocacy Toolkit*; Oxfam (2011), *Oxfam Southern Campaigning and Advocacy*; Oxfam (2010), *Monitoring, evaluation and learning in NGO advocacy*.

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72. UNICEF has a global advocacy community of practice with some 200 staff from 60 countries. Amnesty International has learning groups on advocacy themes with participation from all levels (HQ, sections, and countries). Oxfam has cross-cutting working groups across countries/sections on advocacy priorities. These groups have various roles including sharing experiences and resources, developing common resources and strategies, testing materials and seeking/receiving advice.

LESSON FOUR: All organizations align their advocacy planning to theories of change and/or strategic plans.

73. UNICEF has country-level advocacy theories of change and logframes with key elements of an advocacy strategy such as analysis, specific outcomes, stakeholder mapping and message definition emphasised; advocacy is an integral part of its strategic focus areas. Oxfam has theories of change developed at the country-level and for major advocacy/campaigning strategies; priorities are set globally and regionally in support of its goals. Amnesty's advocacy is based on the organization's strategic plans. The setting of priorities allows Country Offices to work on issues at local, national, regional and global levels, leveraging opportunities for influencing across levels.

LESSON FIVE: Monitoring and evaluation of advocacy is emphasised by all organizations.

74. UNICEF encourages monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of advocacy projects and has produced a toolkit for advocacy evaluation.⁴⁵ Oxfam has specialised M&E staff that support advocacy teams in monitoring and evaluation. Amnesty International carries out M&E at all levels and for major international projects. All organizations having monitoring as an internal responsibility for advocacy staff and evaluation is mainly carried out with external evaluation consultants.

LESSON SIX: Communications is seen as complementary to advocacy within the three organizations.

75. Within UNICEF, communications is both seen as a tactic of advocacy and also as separate activity with non-advocacy goals, such as attitude/behaviour change for example on maternal health⁴⁶ or for fundraising purposes by National Committees. Within Oxfam and Amnesty International, communications supports advocacy with common objectives established and shared tactics. Amnesty use communications specifically to highlight their advocacy on a given issue and the two are often integrated into the delivery, for example a report will be delivered providing evidence and detailing organization advocacy lines, amplified in the media and through other stakeholders to press for change.

LESSON SEVEN: All organizations utilise a full range of tactics.

76. All organizations use a full range of tactics with commonalities in terms of lobbying, digital outreach and media relations. UNICEF and Oxfam have more of a policy focus (analysis and development) whereas Amnesty will use more fact-finding reports to amplify human rights abuses to make direct calls to governments and mobilise others and letter-writing/petitions. All organizations also use public mobilisation as a tactic, i.e. to mobilise the publics to pressure authorities/politicians.
77. The table below summarises a comparison of the three global organizations based on publicly available information:

⁴⁵ UNICEF (2010), *Monitoring and Evaluation, Companion to the Advocacy Toolkit*.

⁴⁶ See www.unicef.org/cbsc/index_42352.html

Table 5: Summary of advocacy within three global organizations

Source: Organization documentation.

	<i>Roles/responsibilities</i>	<i>Planning</i>	<i>Alignment to communications</i>	<i>Goals</i>
UNICEF	HQ team; within programme staff at country/regional level Global advocacy community of practice.	Country-level theories of change and logframe; M&E of advocacy projects.	Both a tactic for advocacy and for non-advocacy programme/project.	Advocacy is integral to all of UNICEF's Strategic Focus Areas.
Oxfam	HQ team; country level advocacy staff and also in large programmes Cross-cutting working groups on advocacy priorities.	Country-level theories of change and for main priorities; M&E frameworks for advocacy priorities with support from M&E staff.	Communication supports advocacy with common objectives.	Advocacy supports Oxfam's 2013-2019 six goals.
Amnesty International	HQ programme; advocacy integrated throughout all sections; Cross-cutting learning groups on advocacy themes.	Advocacy based on strategic plans; M&E carried out at all levels.	Communications follows from strategic advocacy.	Supporting Strategic goals 2016-2019.

6.2 Lessons from case studies

78. The following are lessons that were found to be common across all three case studies:

LESSON ONE: The existence of clear protection priorities on an issue provides UNHCR offices with a clear messages and direction for advocacy.

79. Child protection was highlighted as an area where clear protection priorities were set and known (with the "Way Forward" roadmap). This provided clear messages and directions for Country Offices to build their advocacy upon. Examples were seen where priorities and consequent messages were lacking, such as on family reunification.

LESSON TWO: There is a need to invest in advocacy strategy, design, research, monitoring, analysis, knowledge management, evaluation, roles and responsibilities

80. In the three case studies, there was a need identified to invest more in the advocacy strategy process as detailed in chapter 4.3. While there has been a focus on implementation with positive examples of successes seen (see chapter 5.1), the lack of investment in the strategy process has meant that not all opportunities and approaches for influencing were explored; further that there is limited sharing of successes and learnings through any knowledge management system. Roles and responsibilities for advocacy need further reflection and definition.

LESSON THREE: While some advocacy can produce rapid results; most advocacy will require several years to see results and thus the need to consider resource commitments over time and a longer-term strategy process.

81. Examples were seen where advocacy could produce rapid results, such as changes to some practices of processing UASC in Greece. However, most advocacy required several years to see results, for example, four years in the case of the guardianship law in Greece. Therefore, advocacy needs to be considered as a longer-term process and integrated, as much as possible into the operations multi-year protection and solutions

strategy while reflected in operations plan. At the same time, staff need to be available and resources secured to fund them over a longer period.

LESSON FOUR: Advocacy at the national level to succeed requires knowledge and access to domestic systems, language and culture highlighting the key role of senior national staff.

82. The case studies illustrated that local knowledge and access supported the successful achievements of advocacy goals; in most cases national level advocacy was driven by national staff. However, as described above, advocacy was seen more as an individual task rather than a team effort; there was a risk that information was not being captured systematically but reliant on the skills, knowledge and contacts of specific individuals.

LESSON FIVE: Advocacy at the national level often brings gradual changes to practices and procedures that benefit persons of concern (and the overall sector working for them) in small but valuable ways; rather than in large gestures or changes to laws.

83. Advocacy contributing to gradual changes to practices and procedures was seen in all countries visited that in their totality benefited persons of concern. Examples were seen where legislative change occurred (i.e. above mentioned guardianship law in Greece), although they were less frequent.

LESSON SIX: Most situations require a combination of direct and indirect advocacy, public and private, more collaboration than confrontational approaches, where UNHCR plays a strategic role to leverage others, often in coalition.

84. Advocacy activities reviewed as part of the case studies were a combination of approaches, as illustrated in chapter 5.1. Advocacy tended to be more collaborative than confrontational. UNHCR often worked in coalition to achieve its advocacy goals, as seen in Germany for example on family reunification, where it worked with the German Red Cross, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations and NGOs. However, working in coalition was not always necessary or appropriate, more so it depended upon the advocacy goals set. Overall, a combination of tactics rather than relying on one tactic has proven successful for UNHCR.

LESSON SEVEN: The strategic use of communications can support specific advocacy objectives; it is much more difficult to achieve change of public opinion alone.

85. Where public opinion activities supported advocacy goals, examples were seen where these activities contributed to pressure and influence for policy change, such as in the UK on law and policies on family reunification. Activities designed to change public opinion alone (such as on attitudes towards refugees) lacked design elements that facilitated their measurement or contribution to advocacy results as described above. Although difficult to measure, other global organizations have invested in such efforts and found it both possible and useful – as it strengthened their communications and advocacy work.

6.3 Conclusion

86. The comparison with the three global organizations illustrates that they are all advanced in positioning and resourcing advocacy as a strategic aspect of their work. Key lessons can be drawn in terms of how advocacy could become more strategic within UNHCR and fulfil its potential for the organization. Lessons drawn from the three case studies also provide guidance as to what “works” for UNHCR currently and where improvements could be made. These points are enlarged upon in the next and final chapter.

7. Overall conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

87. **UNHCR's advocacy in Europe during 2015-2017 and in preceding years has contributed to changes of policy, practices and law that will ultimately benefit persons of concern, despite the challenging political environment.** This evaluation documented positive examples of changes achieved through advocacy illustrating its validity as an approach for the organization. Its potential is clearly there to be built upon.
88. **UNHCR is uniquely positioned in Europe to influence as a respected international body given its mandate and legal expertise.** The organization can and does use its access and expertise to influence. UNHCR has adapted to the changing situation in Europe by increasingly working in coalition and using a combination of advocacy tactics. However, other actors, such as civil society and those supporting refugees and asylum-seekers may be better placed to influence in some situations where local issues and context are at the forefront and UNHCR's role would be more of a facilitator or relay between the wider sector and government. It should also be recognised that sometimes the drivers in contexts are beyond what UNHCR can influence, that relevant conduits or coalitions may not be appropriate for the organization to engage with and more traditional partners may similarly not have access or relevance either.
89. **Advocacy is an important component of many activities in Europe but today it is less of a strategic process and more of a tactical approach.** UNHCR needs to be able to react quickly using advocacy as a tactical response, such as in the situations it faced in Europe in 2015. At the same time, there are many issues that UNHCR needs to address that require a longer-term strategic approach that reflects UNHCR position, organizational identity, resources and added value. UNHCR also needs to better analyse the overall context and invest in horizon scanning to anticipate crises, mitigate risks and better plan. To date, the organization lacks the systems and tools to be able to do this fully. The forthcoming DPSM advocacy toolkit on how to advocate is a positive step in the right direction for a more strategic approach.
90. **UNHCR systems are not sufficiently enabling a more strategic approach to advocacy.** The current systems in place provide limited support to encouraging a strategic approach to advocacy. The planning system, as seen in the COPs, places little emphasis on the strategic priorities and outcomes for a given area of work and within that, the role and expected contribution of advocacy. The MYMP is a better "fit" in this regard providing some basic context analysis and assessment of UNHCR and partners' advantages. Financial systems are limited in their support for advocacy that requires long term investment, up to five years or more and far beyond than one-two year budgeting. Knowledge management and learning systems are challenged to support any efficient exchange of information and know-how between staff. M&E systems are

not in place to provide the careful attention needed to measure advocacy successes, learn from failures and consequently improve activities.

91. **Across Europe UNHCR has very little dedicated capacity and support for advocacy.** UNHCR staff carry out advocacy as a task amongst many others with little support, capacity or training. Functions are not designed for the multiple skills needed to deliver effective advocacy, such as communications, policy analysis, stakeholder management and personal access. The need to see advocacy as a joint responsibility for the multifunctional team is yet to be explored consistently across Europe. In most advocacy seen by this evaluation, advocacy was more of an individual rather than a team task.
92. **Setting advocacy priorities in Europe needs a balance of the local to the regional to the global.** In most cases, advocacy was locally driven in Europe, guided by the context and challenges seen for persons of concern. While advocacy was often anchored on the relevant legal references and available guidelines, the support and guidance from the Regional Offices and HQ varied widely, often depending upon the issue and the staff involved, rather than a strategic and collaborative approach to setting advocacy approaches across the region and reflecting regularly on local politics and dynamics. Receptiveness of Country Offices to guidance on advocacy messages and priorities provided by the RBE and HQ also varied. A clearer process to set advocacy priorities across Europe would provide more clarity and clearer directions for Country Offices.
93. **The ability of UNHCR to influence European public opinions towards refugees needs further reflection.** The organization needs to reflect further as to whether it is able to influence public opinion towards refugees given often these views are displaced by a broader set of social-economic grievances unrelated to refugees and migrants. Activities aimed at influencing public opinions on refugees seen by this evaluation were designed and implemented in a manner where it was not possible to measure their effects, beyond estimations of people reached. There has been a more audience-focused approach adopted but it has progressed slowly. Today, other organizations have shown that measurable public opinion influencing activities are possible, and can strengthen their impact, where their activities are based on sound research and realistic and measureable goals. Most existing and ongoing UNHCR public information activities, such as media relations and events could be made more measureable by setting out specific objectives and monitoring results (i.e. reactions to events, pick-up of press releases, desired audience reached, etc.). UNHCR should consider more fundamentally what the aim of UNHCR doing public opinion influencing activities in Europe is. Is it mainly to influence opinions towards refugees or is it rather aimed at branding or fundraising purposes to position the organization as “the refugee agency”? And what does this mean for the approach it needs to take? Considering also that various opinion polls and studies have showed that public opinion towards refugees (and migration in general) in Europe is moving in a positive direction and will continue to do so,⁴⁷ can UNHCR add much value with its limited resources? This is even more so, when considering its particular status as a United Nations body and therefore its limitations regarding who it can

⁴⁷ *The European Social Survey (2017) has found that European publics have become slightly more positive, not negative, about the effect of migration on their societies since 2002. The EU-wide Eurobarometer survey has reported positive feeling towards immigrants and their contribution to society has increased steadily from 2015 to 2017. A 2016 study (Bansak et al) found sympathy amongst Europeans for vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees regardless of respondents' nationality or political beliefs.*

work with and the highly politicised efforts needed to swing public opinion. This evaluation saw examples where public opinion tactics can work well in the support of specific advocacy objectives (i.e. pressuring authorities to adopt / change policies) when not aimed at swaying public opinion at large. This advocacy specific work could usefully be enhanced further.

94. **The relationships between HQ, the RBE, PSP, Regional and Country Offices to support and progress advocacy priorities needs further definition.** The opportunities to advocate up and down the chain between HQ and Country Offices are not always capitalized upon. Setting priorities and roles for advocacy between these different levels would increase the ability of the organization to support priorities set at all levels: country, EU-level and globally. There also seemed to be missed opportunities between linking the donor mobilisation activities of DER and advocacy including PSP.

7.2 Recommendations

95. Below we highlight six key areas for development; four within Europe and two at the global level.

Area for development and recommendation

Recommendation 1: Introduce a more comprehensive strategic process for advocacy in Europe.

Suggested steps include:

- In annual planning exercises at the European (Bureau) and country level, ensure that assessments are made from an advocacy perspective: analysis of issues to address, policy changes needed and stakeholder mapping. This should also concern making choices for advocacy. Is advocacy the best response, and if so, which tactics and approach could be considered?⁴⁸ A multi-year advocacy strategy at the country level to complement the operations plan could be a useful support.
- Set out roles and responsibilities for advocacy at the country level considering the multi-functional team (see recommendation 3)

Recommendation 2: Set advocacy priorities for Europe on annual/biennial basis.

Suggested steps include:

- Introduce an annual/biennial process in Europe to identify up to five advocacy priorities in Europe in a collaborative process with country and regional offices, this could be part of a MYMP process or other comprehensive multi-year planning.
- Ensure that in setting priorities there is an alignment with the European Union engagement Agenda and country priorities.
- RBE together with DIP and other Divisions and units develop the necessary positions and messaging to support the top priorities and assign focal points within RBE for these issues (see recommendation 3).

Recommendation 3: Define advocacy roles and responsibilities in Europe.

Suggested steps include:

- At RBE, appoint focal points from existing staff for the main advocacy priorities identified for Europe.

⁴⁸ The forthcoming DPSM advocacy toolkit will provide more guidance in many of these aspects.

- In Country Offices, nominate an advocacy focal point (existing staff or new position depending upon workload, preferably a senior national staff) to coordinate and lead on the national advocacy strategy.
- In Country Offices, review the role of the multifunctional teams in designing and implementing the national advocacy strategy (i.e. not only the responsibility of the advocacy focal point but a shared responsibility).
- In Brussels (for the European Union audiences) and possibly other large representations, consider if more diverse staff profiles are needed, such as staff with advocacy skill-set and not only with policy expertise, and/or invest further in up-skilling of staff in advocacy.
- Develop communities of practice (CoP) for the main advocacy priorities for Europe that could possibly be extended globally. CoP should have a moderator (i.e. RBE focal point), an online space to share/exchange and an annual physical meeting, budget allowing.

Recommendation 4: Re-orientate public opinion activities in Europe.

Suggested steps include:

- Before engaging on any new public opinion campaigns at the European level, work with the Strategic Communication Section in establishing a baseline based on the existing polling data on European public's attitudes towards refugees; integrate in campaign strategy what the data and other studies advise about the feasibility of such campaigning.
- At the country level, review and modify any ongoing public opinion activities to ensure they are based on measurable and realistic outcomes that are consequently monitored and evaluated.
- At the country level, re-orientate the focus of public opinion activities to support the achievement of specific advocacy objectives, where feasible.
- Consider leveraging existing communication resources in innovative ways: non-branded goodwill ambassadors for example, fund programmes that seek to build tolerance between those communities in rather than by countering messages and amplify in traditional and mainstream media.
- Engage social media companies to counter hate speech about refugees and work with the private sector and other institutions and partners where possible (based on need analysis and mapping where impact can be the highest).

Recommendation 5: Increase resourcing and accountability of advocacy globally.

Suggested steps include:

- Determine at the organizational level, also taking into account the ongoing regionalization process, where accountabilities and capacities should be placed to support advocacy, for instance within the Divisional and Bureaux structures, and employ relevant qualified advocacy staff.
- Fund advocacy focal point positions in large operations (e.g. Greece) and consider the need in strategic points, such as Brussels and London in Europe.
- Develop further the training offering and guidance available for staff to learn more about and implement advocacy (for instance building on the resources developed by DIP/DPSM (forthcoming)).

Recommendation 6: Adapt systems to support a more strategic approach to advocacy.

Suggested steps include:

- Consider ways to adapt the budget and planning systems to allow for multi-year planning and budgeting (up to five years) that is inclusive of advocacy roles and resources. In the interim, consider the continued use of multi-year strategies that set out the longer term changes that UNHCR will contribute to, including outcomes to be achieved by advocacy.
- Define clearer strategies and programme standards for advocacy that can be translated by Regional Bureaux into guidelines for country operations.
- Include advocacy considerations in the review of the results based management systems, with a view to ensuring that strategic planning considers elements commonly used in advocacy assessment and planning such as stakeholder assessment, power analysis and theory of change and enables operations to define specific outcomes and indicators for advocacy dimensions of programme management.

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- Introduce more effective tools for monitoring and evaluating outcomes that are achieved by advocacy and communications, starting with basic guidance notes for both areas setting out advice on monitoring, sample indicators and methods for measurement and that considers how UNHCR works with and through others.
 - Review knowledge management systems with a view to including the possibility to stock and exchange advocacy resources and facilitate learning through communities of practice.

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