



## Leading a UNICEF Discussion Series

### Choose a topic:

The best way to engage people in UNICEF's work is to educate them about a particular issue that you feel is important to the work of child survival. There are many ways to demonstrate UNICEF's impact and need in the global community. Select an issue or area of the world to highlight during your UNICEF discussion series. Below are a few places to look for ideas:

- For more information about UNICEF's areas of focus (early childhood health interventions, nutrition, education, emergencies, HIV/AIDS and immunization) and programs, please visit the UNICEF website at [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org) and the U.S. Fund for UNICEF website at [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org).
- The Humanitarian Action Report is an annual publication highlighting the current work of UNICEF around the world. It also outlines urgent needs and current emergencies world wide. [www.unicefusa.org/har](http://www.unicefusa.org/har)
- Current events are a great source of ideas, as are your own interests and experiences. Use campus events as an opportunity to highlight work around the world. For example, if there is a blood drive on campus host a speaker to discuss the lack of healthcare for needy families in the US and abroad. During Homecoming host a discussion about the creative ways UNICEF is using sports to bring information about HIV and AIDS to Kenya.
- Movies are also wonderful tools to spark discussion. There are a variety of documentaries on issues related to child survival and an increasing number of films with a social message. Feel free to show a UNICEF overview video prior to the feature length film. See [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org) or [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org) for available videos.

### Ensure an Engaging Program

- **Multiple Viewpoints.** If you decide to have a panel discussion, be sure to include a variety of experts or speakers who can talk to all sides of an issue. You can decide if this means a combined international, national, and local approach to a topic or taking a pro/con approach to your panel or series.
- **Q and A.** Be sure to plan enough time for questions at the end of your speaker's presentation. Always have questions prepared ahead of time. Most crowds need some time to ease into their thoughts immediately after a presentation.
- **Small Group Discussion.** Break into small groups for further discussion of the presentation. You can divide the group by numbering off or by desired topics of conversation, such as aspects of the AIDS Crisis. Have a few questions prepared for each group and consider asking the groups for a summary or insight that they are taking away from their time together.



- **Report backs.** If you do decide to break the group into a small discussion format, encourage participation by asking groups to report back on a standard group of questions. What stood out for you from the presentation? Why is this topic important to you and/or this campus? What are the critical elements of this conflict? How can we be further involved in this issue? Etc.

### ***Working with Speakers:***

There are many factors to consider when asking speakers to address your campus audience. It is their job to deliver the best possible presentation for your participants, but good preparation on your part can help ensure their success. Here are a few simple ways to help speakers give you the most for your and their time.

1. **Choose Carefully:** If possible, invite only speakers a member of your group has seen give a presentation or training on the topic you are interested in. Even if someone is an “expert” in their field, they may be an uninspiring public speaker. If this is not possible, at least make sure the individual has experience speaking to large and small groups and a solid base of knowledge on the topic area.
2. **Be specific:** Work with the speaker to set specific goals for the discussion series. Explain how these goals mesh with the goals of the discussion panel. Clarity is key with outside speakers. Often these individuals have a broad range of knowledge on any given topic, so it is critical that you narrow down the topic for them. (i.e.: Don’t ask an International Human Rights lawyer to talk about “Human Rights”. Ask her to talk about, “abuses of human rights in specific countries around the world”) Make sure the speakers are aware of audience size, age range, and length of presentation.
3. **Invite the Speaker early:** Whenever possible, have the speakers arrive early and mingle. The more time the presenter spends getting to know you and the group, the more they will be able to mold their presentation to the audience.
4. **Plan your introduction carefully.** Make sure not to mispronounce your speaker’s name or misspell it in any literature. Introduce the speaker with important details regarding his/her background, education and skills.
5. **Promote them properly.** Make sure the wider campus community is aware that you will be hosting a speaker and ask them to bring questions related to the topic. Make a Facebook event or posters dedicated to the upcoming panel. If it is a particularly impressive/prominent speaker, you may want to invite other on-campus groups to join in the promotion and sponsorship.
7. **Avoid last minute changes.** If you have asked a speaker to talk for 20 minutes starting at 5:00 pm, make sure that you are ready to give them the floor for 20 minutes at 5:00pm, even if it means shifting the program in other areas.
8. **Make the room work.** Know what set up the speaker requires before they arrive, i.e. PowerPoint, flip chart, markers, etc. Ensure that the room is set to their specifications.



9. **Evaluate the event.** Provide a feedback form and discover what worked and what didn't. Also, make sure that a volunteer is taking comprehensive notes, both to help reflect on the event and to email to members who missed the event.

10. **Send a thank you note.** A must with any guest speaker. If possible, have a number of participants sign it as well.

## ***Logistics***

### **1. Select a Date(s) and Time**

Choosing the right time to host your UNICEF Discussion Series is important to the success of your event. Try to give yourself at least 2 months of planning time. Check the calendar to make sure the date you've selected does not conflict with a holiday or another campus event; keep the time of semester in mind. Many volunteers choose to celebrate a UN observance day with a UNICEF Discussion.

### **2. Choose a Venue**

Finding the right location to host the UNICEF Discussion Series can sometimes be a difficult decision. Keep the ideal number of participants in mind as you are choosing a venue. If there are a number of dates for the event, make sure the same venue is available for all of them.

### **3. Expenses and Revenue**

Covering the cost of a UNICEF Discussion Series will be an important job. As the organizer, you should have a very clear understanding of the realistic revenue and expenses. It is critical that events that benefit UNICEF are cost effective and are viewed as appropriate to the community. Expenses should not exceed 10% of all collected revenue. This goal should be outlined in your budget during the very beginning stages of planning.

### **4. Tickets**

Decide whether you want an admission fee or to simply ask for donations. If there is an admission fee, set the ticket price at a realistic level for your campus community. Sell tickets ahead of time and at the door. Make sure you have change on hand for the sales and create a procedure for keeping track of the money. If you are just planning on asking for donations, suggest a donation amount and encourage participants to be generous and have a collection plan.

## ***Outreach***

1. **Create Publicity.** Flyers are a great way to publicize the UNICEF Discussion Series. Post them on campus and in your community and include all relevant information about the event. Flyers can often be hung in corner store windows and local businesses. You can also distribute them in classrooms, dorms, bathrooms, cafeterias, etc.



**2. Send Invitations.** Creating print or electronic invitations is a great way to communicate all pertinent information about your event. You may want to send special invites to your campus advisor, professors, members of the administration, or the leadership of other clubs on campus.

**3. Radio/Newspaper**

Writing a letter to the editor of the campus newspaper is another way to let people know about your upcoming event. Use campus radio stations to publicize!

**4. Chalking**

Grab some friends and chalk up the sidewalks. Do this in high traffic areas on campus and don't forget to include the important details – when, where and what.

**5. Class Announcements**

Ask teachers before class if you can announce your event to the class. Make sure you have flyers on hand to give to anyone who seems interested.

**6. Partnering**

Talking to other groups is a great way to increase the buzz about your event. See if other group leaders are willing to let you announce your event in their group meetings. Consider sponsoring your discussion series with other campus groups who may have similar interests.

## **What are the steps to plan a UNICEF Discussion Series?**

Below are the basic steps to take when planning a UNICEF event.

**Pre-Event:**

- \_ Choose a topic, title and format for your UNICEF Discussion Series.
- \_ Choose a date or dates and time for the event.
- \_ Determine ideal number of attendees.
- \_ Set up a budget.
- \_ Secure a venue.
- \_ Research potential speakers and fundraising activities.
- \_ Begin contacting potential speakers. Follow up a week or two after initial contact.
- \_ Brainstorm ways to advertise your event and conduct outreach.
- \_ Confirm location.
- \_ Sell tickets, if applicable.
- \_ Confirm speakers and send them event details.
- \_ Secure donations for food.
- \_ Check the details – chairs, LCD projector for Power point, signage rules, etc.
- \_ Print programs, if applicable.
- \_ Post your event on the Online Volunteer Calendar at [www.unicefusa.org/volunteer](http://www.unicefusa.org/volunteer).
- \_ Train volunteers for duties.

**The Big Event:**

- \_ Arrive early.



- \_ Set up.
  - \_ Create a reception area.
  - \_ Take photos.
  - \_ Create a sign-up sheet for those who would like to learn more about UNICEF.
  - \_ Thank speakers, sponsors, and volunteers.
  - \_ Clean-up.
- After the Event:**
- \_ Send written thank you notes.
  - \_ Process the donations from your event online and **where should they send this?**
  - \_ Upload photos on your TeamRaiser homepage.

## ***Sample Agenda***

### **UNICEF Discussion Series: The Impact of Water**

Lecture Hall:

3:00 - 4:30pm

Sample Agenda:

2:00pm Arrival and Set –Up

2:30pm Volunteer Training and Overview

2:45 pm Arrivals and Greeting

3:00 pm Welcome, Introduction of UNICEF Competition, and Overview of the Agenda

3:10 pm Speaker Introduction

3:15 pm Introduction of Speaker to discuss Global Water and Sanitation

Q and A

3:45 pm Small Groups to discuss Desertification, Climate Change, Access to Water and Conflict Zones (facilitated by Campus Group members)

4:15 pm Small Group Report-Backs

4:30 pm Adjourn

### **Potential Speaker Organizations**

The following organizations may have speakers willing to participate in your UNICEF Discussion Series. These organizations have similar missions and can discuss many issues of child Survival. The website of each organization is listed below; follow the contacts link to find the information for a local chapter or representative.

#### **Catholic Relief Services**

[www.catholicrelief.org](http://www.catholicrelief.org)

#### **Foreign Consular Offices in the United**



## **States**

[www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco/c9299.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco/c9299.htm)

## **Global Action for Children**

[www.globalactionforchildren.org](http://www.globalactionforchildren.org)

## **Global AIDS Alliance**

[www.globalaidsalliance.org](http://www.globalaidsalliance.org)

## **Global Health Council**

[www.globalhealth.org](http://www.globalhealth.org)

## **Habitat for Humanity**

[www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org)

## **Heifer International**

[www.heifer.org/](http://www.heifer.org/)

## **Kiwanis**

[www.kiwanis.org](http://www.kiwanis.org)

## **March of Dimes**

[www.modimes.org](http://www.modimes.org)

## **Red Cross**

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

## **World Relief**

[www.wr.org](http://www.wr.org)

## **Rotary International - Polio or HIV/AIDS**

[www.rotary.org/support/](http://www.rotary.org/support/)

[CDAreps/index.html](http://CDAreps/index.html)

## **Return Peace Corp Volunteers**

[www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)

## **United Way**

[www.national.unitedway.org](http://www.national.unitedway.org)

## **World Vision**

[www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org)