



Martha, Age: 16, Country: Sierra Leone

Martha's Story

The Impact of Armed Conflict

A MIDDLE SCHOOL UNIT (GRADES 6-8)

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Unless stated otherwise, the source for all charts, figures, maps, and statistics used in this unit is: United Nations Children’s Fund, (UNICEF), New York. Additional sources are noted when they are required. Website addresses (URLs) are provided throughout this unit for reference and additional research. The authors have made every effort to ensure these sites and information are up-to-date at the time of publication, but availability in the future cannot be guaranteed.

UNIT OVERVIEW

Martha's Story The Impact of Armed Conflict A Middle School Unit (Grades 6–8)

Unit Overview

Martha's Story is a unit of two lessons designed to:

1. Raise students' awareness of the effect of armed conflict upon civilians.
2. Increase students' understanding of the impact of armed conflict upon children in particular.
3. Explore solutions and programs that can help children and teens in times of armed conflict.

Lesson 1: Students explore the impact of war on children by:

- Examining drawings made by children who have experienced war.
- Viewing a video of Martha, a girl from Sierra Leone, who has lived through civil war.
- Read a story that further explains the effect of war on her life.

Lesson 2: Students will have opportunity to:

- Use statistics to gain insight into the impact of armed conflict on children.
- Consider the types of programs developed to meet the needs of war-affected children.
- Examine UNICEF's actions in the field during situations of armed conflict using the case studies.

Background Information

Armed conflict causes children to miss out on their childhood in many ways. The most direct physical impact is death—according to UNICEF, more than 2 million children have died in armed conflicts in the past decade. At least 6 million children have been seriously injured or disabled.

Conflict increases the risk of children being exposed to abuse, violence, and exploitation, with sexual violence often used as a weapon of war. Disruption of the local water and electricity supplies in times of armed conflict increases the spread of disease in war-affected areas. This creates stressed and/or damaged health care systems which are often ill equipped to deal with the casualties—including HIV/AIDS and other infections—that result.

Information on sexual violence is included as background for the teacher. It is not mentioned in the materials for students.

Impact on Children

Armed conflict has a psychological impact on children as well. In the past 10 years, an estimated 20 million children have been forced to flee their homes because of conflict. Many of these children are either living as refugees in neighboring countries or are internally displaced within their own national borders. More than 1 million children have been orphaned or separated from their families during this time.

War interrupts children's chances to go to school, causing long-term harm to their learning and employment possibilities. Schools are often targeted for destruction by armed groups, depriving children of a much-needed sense of routine and normalcy, as well as hope for the future.

The psychological impact is especially devastating for the estimated 300,000 child soldiers—boys and girls under the age of 18—who are currently involved in more than 30 conflicts worldwide. They are used as combatants, messengers, porters and cooks. They are also used to provide sexual services. Some are forcibly recruited or abducted. Others are driven to join by poverty, abuse and discrimination. Still others join in order to seek revenge for violence enacted against themselves and their families. Many of these children have difficulties reintegrating into their communities when conflicts end and may be rejected by family and community members because of the acts they have been forced to commit.

Source: http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_armedconflict.html

UNICEF's Role

In addition to partnering with other organizations to provide essential supplies (food, water, medical supplies) during armed conflict, UNICEF works to help:

- Disarm and reintegrate child soldiers back into their communities.
- Reunite children with their families.
- Provide basic education.
- Ensure that services reach children who are disabled or affected by HIV/AIDS.

UNICEF also works to build a more protective environment for children by providing psychosocial assistance (for children who have been traumatized), landmine education, and HIV/AIDS prevention and education. It works with governments to ensure that children are not used by the armed forces and that basic services reach those who are most vulnerable.

Martha's Story focuses on a 15-year-old girl from Sierra Leone who is one of the many children in Sierra Leone who were affected by the recent civil war which lasted from 1991-2002 and left 50,000 people dead. Martha is currently working in a market and hoping to return to school.

To read more about armed conflict and UNICEF's work, go to:

http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_armedconflict.html

<http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/profiles/conflict.php>

http://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Armed_Conflict.pdf

Now many children who were unable to attend school during the war are returning, despite being over-age. This means there are fewer places in school for younger children. In fact:

- Only 39% of girls and 43% of boys attend elementary school in Sierra Leone.
- Only 12% of girls and 14 % of boys go on to high school.

With much of its infrastructure damaged by the war, Sierra Leone is one of the world's poorest countries—its yearly gross national income is only \$200 per person. It has the world's highest rate of child mortality—over 28% of children die before their fifth birthday.

Armed conflict in Sierra Leone has had a devastating impact on children:

- Over 10,000 children were directly affected through family separation, random violence, sexual assault, and abduction into the fighting forces.
- Large numbers of schools were destroyed during the war.

Source: http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_armedconflict.html

More information on UNICEF's work in Sierra Leone and up to date statistics, please visit:

<http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sierraleone.html>

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sierraleone_statistics.html#68

<http://www.childinfo.org>

For information on postwar education, go to:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sierraleone_30628.html

Evaluation/Assessment

Students will be evaluated based on their:

- Participation in class discussions and small group work.
- Ability to describe the links between armed conflict and civilians' rights issues such as health and education.
- Ability to identify key points when reading a text.
- Ability to consider what types of interventions are priorities at different stages of conflict.
- Ability to calculate and interpret statistics.

Service Projects

Regardless of their range and scope, the best service projects are those developed and initiated by students themselves. They can last an afternoon, a weekend, a week, a month—depending on the goals students set. They can be done on an individual basis, or in pairs or small groups—in some cases, the project may be so big that an entire class or even school can get involved!

Some possible service projects for Martha's Story include:

Advocate

Provide an opportunity for students to write their elected officials allowing them to voice their support of the issues UNICEF's addresses. To learn more about the issues and how your students can take action, please visit <http://volunteers.unicefusa.org/activities/advocate/>.

UNICEF Voices of Youth: Take Action—UNICEF Voices of Youth provides a variety of tools for youth are interested in taking action, resources can be found at http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction_97.html.

National Standards

The TeachUNICEF lesson plans are designed in line with National Content Standards. Using the National Content Standards as a guide, these lessons can be aligned with State Standards.

	Lesson	
	1	2
National Organization		
National Council for the Social Studies (K-12) Source: Expectations of Excellence — Curriculum Standards for Social Studies		
People, Places, and Environments Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.	✓	✓
Global Connections Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.	✓	✓
National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association (K-12) Source: Standards for the English Language Arts		
Standard 1: Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace.	✓	✓
Standard 3: Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).	✓	✓
Standard 9: Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions and social roles.	✓	✓
Principles and Standards for School Mathematics Source: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics		
Data Analysis and Probability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer them • Select and use appropriate statistical methods to analyze data • Develop and evaluate inferences and predictions that are based on data 		✓

LESSON 1

Martha's Story
The Impact of Armed Conflict
A Middle School Unit (Grades 6–8)

WAR: CHILDREN'S VIEWS

TOTAL TIME: 100 MINUTES

Objectives

Students will:

- Become aware of the range of ways in which armed conflict affects children.
- Discuss the long-term effects of armed conflict on children's lives.

Session Plan

Part A

- Opening Activity: 15 Minutes
- Making Connections: 25 Minutes
- Imagining the Future: 15 Minutes
- Homework: 10 Minutes

Part B

- Opening Activity: 5 Minutes
- Making Connections: 20 Minutes
- Bringing It Together: 10 Minutes

Vocabulary

The following words may not be daily occurrences in a student's vocabulary. Feel free to use this list as a resource for students to expand their working vocabulary as they encounter these words in this unit.

- Devastating
- Landmine
- Rebels
- Stroke
- Responsibilities

Materials Needed

- Chalkboard/Newsprint/Whiteboard
- Student copies of “Children’s Drawings” (Handout #1)
- World map
- Computer with Internet access, connected to projector, if possible
- Student copies of “Martha’s Video Guide” (Handout #2)
- Student copies of “Martha’s Story” (Handout #3)
- Student copies of “Homework Handout” (Handout #4)

Set Up

Pair students up in advance. List each pair on the board, with instructions for students to sit with their partner as they come in.

Part A

Opening Activity

Directions:

1. Distribute copies of Handout #1, “Children’s Drawings.” Ask the students to look at these drawings with a partner or in a group and discuss what they see. Then ask the class as a whole:
 - What do you think is the theme of these drawings?
 - How old do you think the children who drew these were?
 - Why do you think the children drew these pictures?
2. Explain that these are drawings done by children aged 7-12 in countries at war. Share with the class the fact that war is taking place in many parts of the world, and that 90% of the people who are affected by war are civilians, not members of the armed forces. About half of those civilians are children, whose lives are deeply affected by war.
3. Ask each student pair to make a list of 3-5 ways that armed conflict might affect children. Ask a few pairs to share from their lists.

Making Connections

Directions:

1. Explain that this lesson will focus on the life of Martha, a 15-year-old girl who lived through the civil war in Sierra Leone, from 1991-2002, as a rebel group tried to overthrow the government. Have the class locate Sierra Leone on a map.
2. Distribute handout #3 (“Martha’s Story”). Read aloud to students, asking them to follow along. Have students read the story again, silently. Ask students to underline the most important events in the story.
3. Work as a class to create a timeline of the important events in Martha’s life thus far. Project together into the future—what might she do if she goes back to school? What might she do if she does not go back to school?

Imagining the Future

Directions:

1. Distribute Handout #3, “Martha’s Story.” After students have read the story and answered the questions, discuss their responses. Then ask:
 - How might the changes in Martha’s life that came about because of the war affect her in the future?
 - Of the UNICEF activities mentioned in the story, which ones do you think would be most important to Martha? Why?

Further Questions for Discussion

Ask students:

Why do you think war affects so many people who are not a part of the armed forces?

Homework

Use the questions from current handout #3 (in-class worksheet on Martha’s story) as homework.

Part B

Opening Activity

Directions:

1. As students enter class, ask them to sit in small groups and to share their homework responses with each other. Were there many common responses? Were there some differing ones?

Making Connections

Directions:

1. Post handout #2 (“Martha’s Video Guide”) on overhead or distribute. Tell students they will now see Martha talk about her life. Tell them you will show the video twice. The first time, they should watch and listen closely. The second time, they will be taking notes to answer the questions on the guide.
2. Show the video, then go over the questions on the guide aloud to prepare students for review. www.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=171621&title=Martha_s_Story__Armed_Conflict_and_Children&ref=Teachunicef
3. Give students time to complete the video guide questions.
4. Have students discuss in pairs—how is Martha’s life similar to yours? How is it different? What are the things about Martha’s life that seem to make her happy? How are they similar to or different from the things that make you happy? What does Martha need most to secure a successful and happy future?

Bringing It Together

Directions:

1. Have students gather Martha materials: story, homework, video guide questions, timeline. Tell them that one powerful way to bring awareness of an issue is to write an article about it for a newspaper. Tell them that they will now be acting as journalists and will write an article about Martha so that other people learn about her life. They will begin their articles in class and complete them as homework. Encourage them to use information from all the material sources in their article.

Tell them that during the next lesson, they will learn about other places where armed conflict is affecting children and what organizations like UNICEF are doing to help those children.

Extension Activities

The following assignments can be given as part of an overall class-based research project. Or, they can be done as extra credit or make-up work.

- Write an “inner monologue” about what might go through Martha’s mind as she works on the streets, cooks and watches her friends and family members go to school. Or, create a graphic novel/comic or storyboard that explores the same events.
- UNICEF bases all its work with governments on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (an international treaty on the rights of children), helping them create the laws and services that will help meet children’s rights. Read what the CRC says about children in armed conflict, especially:
 - Article 38—children under the age of 15 should not be part of armed forces.
 - Article 39—governments have the responsibility to help rehabilitate child soldiers.

You can find the full text at <http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm> and an abridged version of the CRC at http://www.unicef.org/magic/media/documents/what_rights_flyer_english.pdf.

- Hold a debate on what you think the minimum age for joining the armed forces should be:
 - Use examples from US history to illustrate your position.
 - Read the “Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict” which was adopted in 2002. This is an addition to the Convention on the Rights of the Child that children under the age of 18 (rather than 15) should not be part of armed forces. Because it is optional, countries don’t have to agree to this protocol.

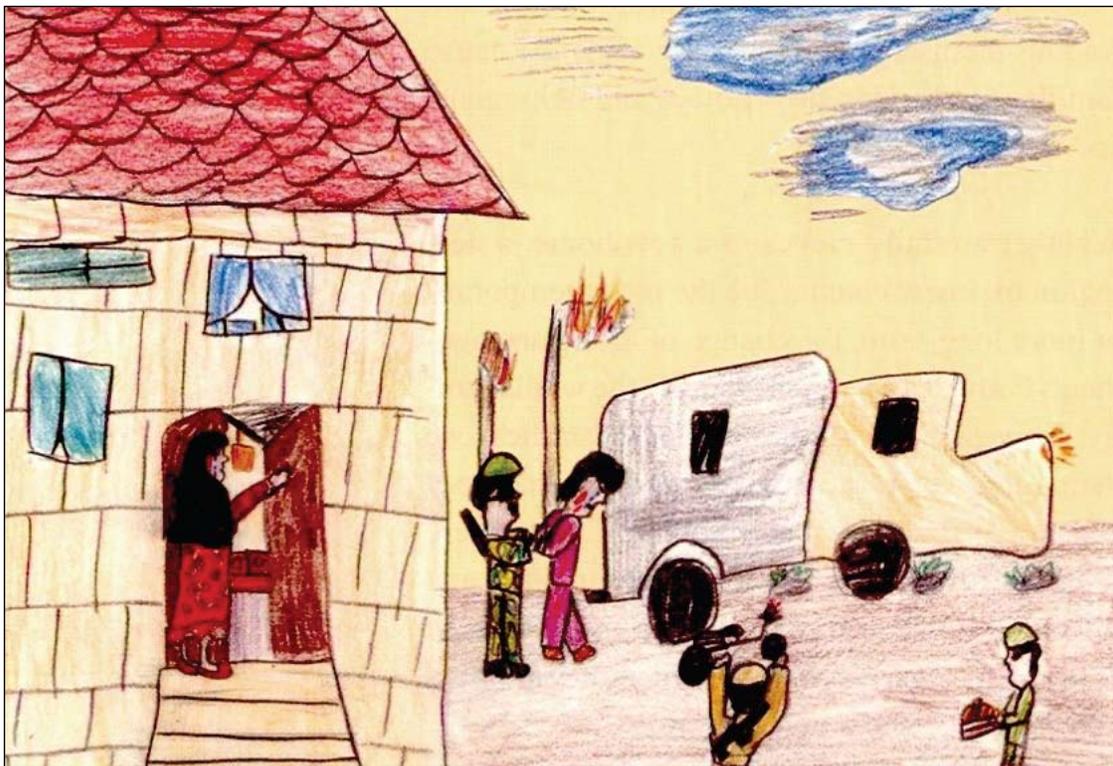
Read more about the Optional Protocol at http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30203.html.

Children's Drawings

1



2

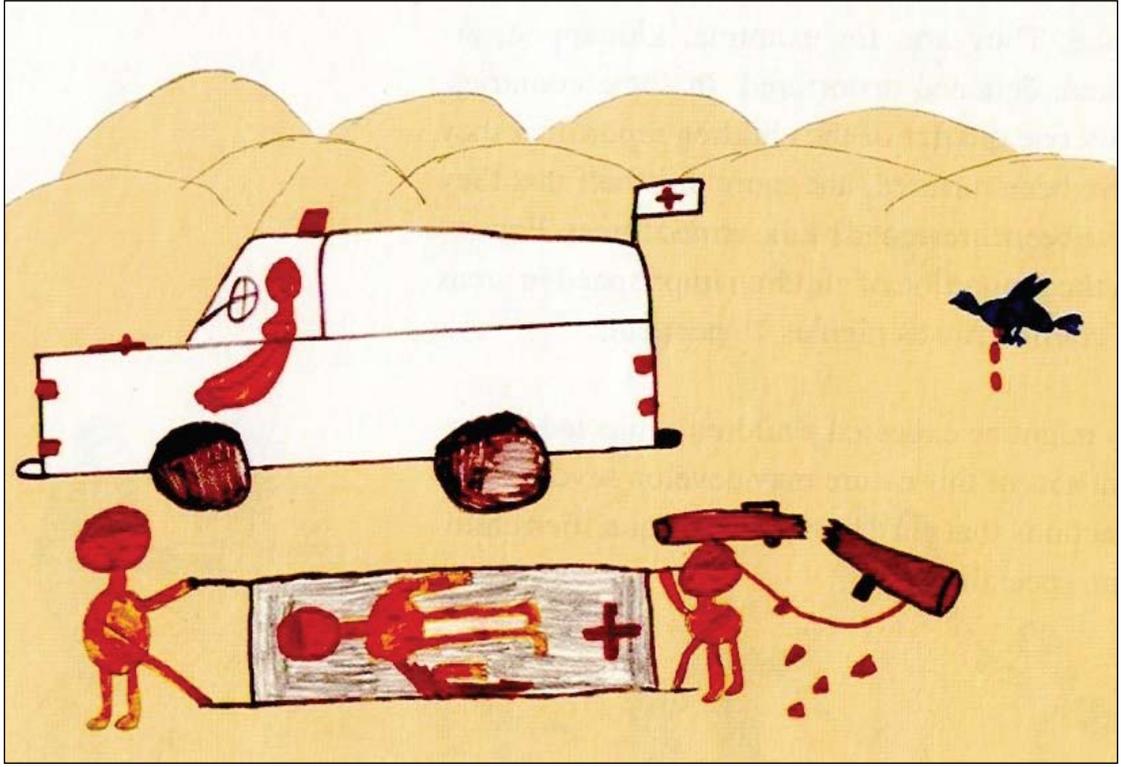


Source: Macksoud, Mona. *Helping Children Cope with the Stresses of War*, 2000, UNICEF New York.

3



4



Source: Macksoud, Mona. *Helping Children Cope with the Stresses of War*, 2000, UNICEF New York.

5



6



Source: Macksoud, Mona. *Helping Children Cope with the Stresses of War*, 2000, UNICEF New York.

Martha's Video Guide

Martha is 15 and lives in Sierra Leone. She lives with her stepmother's family and works selling biscuits in the local market. Watch the video, then answer these questions:

1. Why is Martha an orphan?

2. Why doesn't Martha go to school?

3. Why does she have to work?

4. Describe the game that Martha plays after school.

5. Think about the video and questions you answered. What do you think is the impact of armed conflict on children and families?

Martha's Story

As a young child in Sierra Leone, Martha was told that she looked like her mother, so she spent hours in front of the mirror, trying to see in her own features an image of the mother she lost as a toddler. Martha's father, a successful businessman, cared deeply for his daughter. He bought her new clothes every week and took her to school every morning.

In 2000, when Martha was eight years old, her village was attacked by members of a rebel group trying to overthrow the government. As the sound of gunfire filled the neighborhood, Martha and her father stayed locked inside their house for over a week, waiting for the fighting to stop.

When things quieted down, the village was occupied by rebels and the situation was tense. Martha's father saw his business drop off, and he was forced to move to a town he thought would be safe from rebel attack. There, he was able to rebuild his business and send money and clothes to his daughter.

With her father gone, Martha moved in with her grandmother, who made a living by selling vegetables in the market. Sometimes Martha had to help her and missed school as a result. Her life became even more difficult when her grandmother had a severe stroke, which left her unable to walk and almost unable to speak. Martha, by then 13 years old, found herself caring for her ill grandmother and had no news from her father.

Though Martha was barely able to keep up with school work, she managed to pass the National Primary School Examination, which allowed her to go on to high school. However, with her father gone and her grandmother no longer able to work, there was no money for the necessary school fees.

Martha's hopes for continuing her education now depended on her father, and she anxiously waited to hear from him. One morning, she received devastating news: her father had been murdered by the rebels. "The whole world stopped for me," says Martha. "For the first time in my life I felt alone. I realized I was an orphan."

Martha is now staying with her stepmother (a woman her father married before his death and who she refers to as 'aunty') and her stepmother's three children. To help her new family, Martha sells biscuits in the street market, but she longs to go back to school. Luckily, her stepmother's new husband has shown sympathy toward her and is willing to help.

The Impact of Armed Conflict

Sierra Leone's civil war (from 1991–2002) affected over 10,000 children like Martha, causing separation from their families and exposing them to violence. Some were injured or killed by landmines. Others were forced to serve as child soldiers. Many more children missed out on schooling, and were often unable to get health care during the conflict.

UNICEF helps children like Martha by providing food, water, and medical supplies during times of conflict. It also helps children who are serving as child soldiers to leave armed groups and return to their families and communities. Where children have been separated from their families during conflict, UNICEF works to reunite them. In addition, the organization provides counseling for children who need emotional help. For the many children who, like Martha, want to continue learning, UNICEF provides basic education so that children do not miss out on school during times of conflict.

Source: www.unicef.org/sowc06/profiles/full

1. Name at least three ways in which armed conflict has affected Martha's life.

2. Martha has many responsibilities. What are two of those responsibilities?

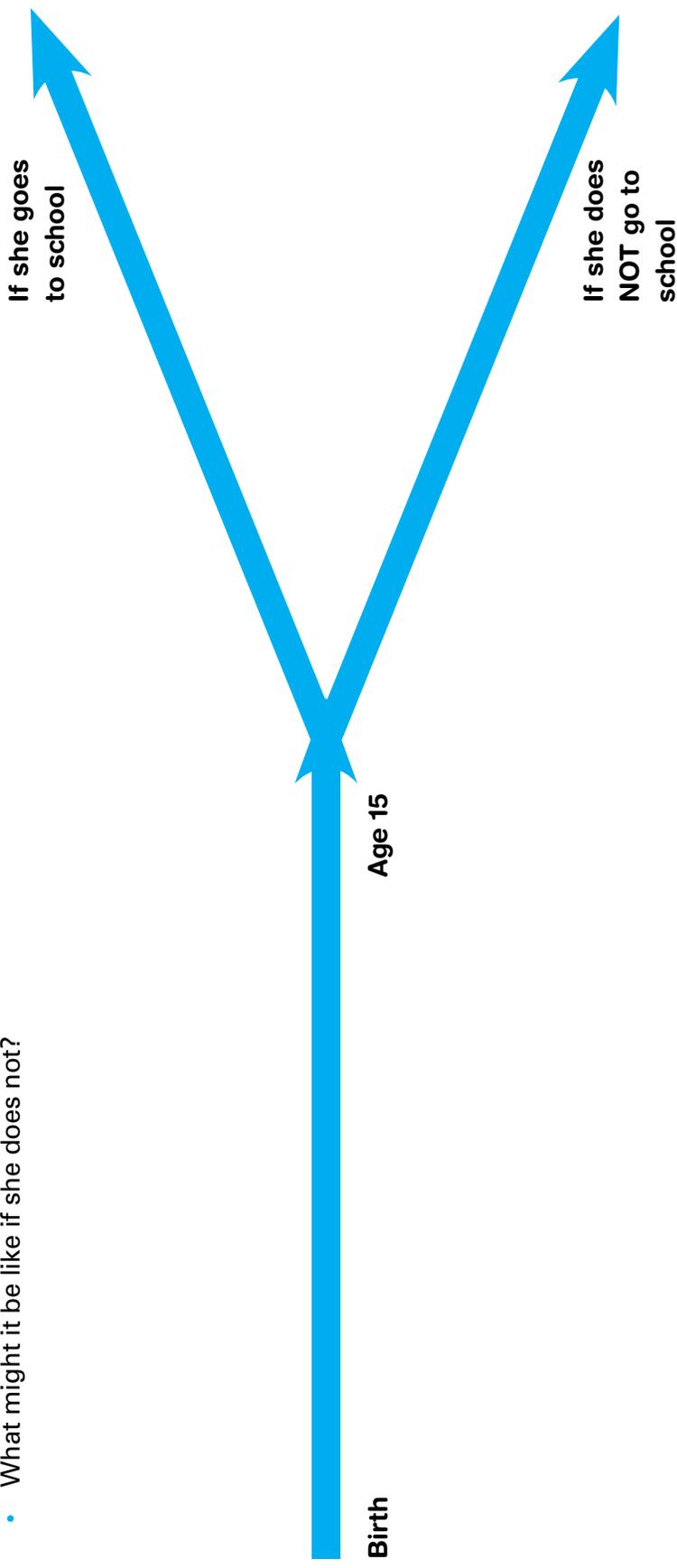
3. What else do you think is needed to support children and families involved in armed conflict?

Homework Handout

Directions:

Based on your notes on the video and what you have read:

1. Draw a timeline of key past events in Martha's life.
2. Extend the timeline into the future:
 - What might Martha's life be like if she goes to school?
 - What might it be like if she does not?



LESSON 2

Martha's Story The Impact of Armed Conflict A Middle School Unit (Grades 6–8)

THE COSTS OF ARMED CONFLICT

TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES

Objective

Students will:

- Use statistics to examine the impact of armed conflict on children in more depth.
- Explore the range of needs that children in armed conflict have.
- Discover how UNICEF assists war-affected children.

Session Plan

- Opening Activity: 5 Minutes
- Adding It Up: 15 Minutes
- Working It Out: 25 Minutes

Vocabulary

The following words may not be daily occurrences in a student's vocabulary. Feel free to use this list as a resource for students to expand their working vocabulary as they encounter these words in this unit.

- Child Mortality
- Immunization
- Landmine
- Malnutrition
- Measles
- Militia
- Munitions
- Rural
- Sanitation
- Taliban
- Tetanus
- Water Purification

Materials Needed

- Chalkboard/Newsprint/Whiteboard
- Student copies of "Child Mortality and Armed Conflict" (Handout #5)
- Student copies of "Elementary School Attendance Rates in Countries at War" (Handout #6)
- Student copies of "UNICEF at Work in War-Affected Countries" (Handout #7)
- World map

Set Up

Students can either continue working as teams from Lesson 1, or work independently.

Opening Activity

Directions: Ask students to read their articles from the previous lesson to a classmate sitting next to them, then have one volunteer read aloud to the class.

Adding It Up

Directions:

1. Divide the class into 4 groups. Give each group one copy each of handout #5 (“Child Mortality and Armed Conflict”) and handout #6 (Elementary School Attendance Rates in Countries at War”), or post on overhead projectors.
2. Ask each group to study the graphs and to answer the following questions (one person should act as scribe and record the answers):
 - How does armed conflict affect child mortality?
 - What is the average elementary school attendance rate for boys and girls in these nine countries that have been affected by armed conflict?
 - How does low elementary school attendance affect a country’s future?
 - How does not going to school in a country experiencing armed conflict affect a boy’s life? A girl’s life?
3. As time permits, ask volunteers to read their answers aloud.

UNICEF and other UN organizations and their partners refer to the “under five” mortality rate—the number or percentage of children who die before reaching their 5th birthday.

The graph in Handout #5 shows the 12 countries in which 1 in 5 children die before reaching the age of five. It also shows which ones have experienced major armed conflict since 1999.

Working It Out

Directions:

1. Explain to the class that UNICEF is the United Nations (UN) agency that works to promote children’s rights. It has offices in most of the world’s developing countries. UNICEF develops projects, or works with other local organizations to develop projects, that improve children’s health, nutrition, education, access to sanitation and clean water, and other basic rights.

2. Divide the class into small groups. Ask them to discuss:
 - If you work for UNICEF and have to create programs to help children like Martha, what would those programs do?

Allow time for discussion.
3. Ask the groups to report on their priorities to the whole class.
4. Give out copies of Handout #7, “UNICEF at Work in War-Affected Countries.” Ask each small group to read one of the short case studies on UNICEF’s work in a country experiencing armed conflict. They can use the chart to make notes on the different kinds of programs that UNICEF supports when conflict first starts, after the conflict has been going on for a while, and after the conflict ends.

NOTE: The case studies include one on UNICEF’s work in Lebanon during the July-August 2006 war. This may raise questions about UNICEF’s role in the Middle East and North Africa region. UNICEF maintains an active presence in this politically complex part of the world. More information on UNICEF programs in this region can be found at: <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/northafrica.html>.

When each group has finished their case study, have them report about what they found to the rest of the class (including showing where their country is on a world map). Discuss:

- Were there different types of programs at the beginning, middle, or end of a conflict? If so, why?
- Were there any types of programs that were common to all of the countries?
- Were there types of programs that only happened in one country?
- If so, what might be the reason for that?

Futher Questions for Discussion

- UNICEF is increasingly starting education programs as early as possible during crisis situations. Why do you think this is the case?
- What do you think needs to be done—by citizens, by governments, by the UN—to prevent conflicts from starting in the first place?

Extension Activities

- Learn more about UNICEF's work in countries affected by armed conflict. Visit the UNICEF website to search for information by country at: www.unicef.org/infobycountry/. Use the links in Handout #7 to research these countries further. Other countries that have recently been in the news, and may be of interest to students, include:

Iraq: www.unicef.org/infobycountry/iraq.html

Sudan: www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sudan.html

West Bank and Gaza: www.unicef.org/oPt/

- You have been asked to design a program that will help get students back to school quickly during an emergency. You think "If only we had a School-In-A-Box!" What would you put into the boxes?

Read about UNICEF's "School-In-A-Box" program at: http://www.unicef.org/supply/index_cpe_education.html.

What was in UNICEF's box that was not in yours?

- Visit UNICEF's Voices of Youth website at: http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/mdg/explore_2204.html or <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/>.

Focus on these three Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

- MDG 1: By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people who live on less than \$1 per day.
- MDG 2: By 2015, make sure that all girls and boys complete elementary education.
- MDG 4: By 2015, reduce child mortality by two-thirds.

How would ending armed conflict help to achieve these goals?

Find out about UNICEF's work to educate children about landmines, and help children who have become disabled by landmines at: http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_landmines.html and http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_24002.html.

Find out what UNICEF is doing to help children who serve as soldiers. Links to information about child soldiers can be found at: http://www.unicef.org/media/media_pr_childsoldiers.html.

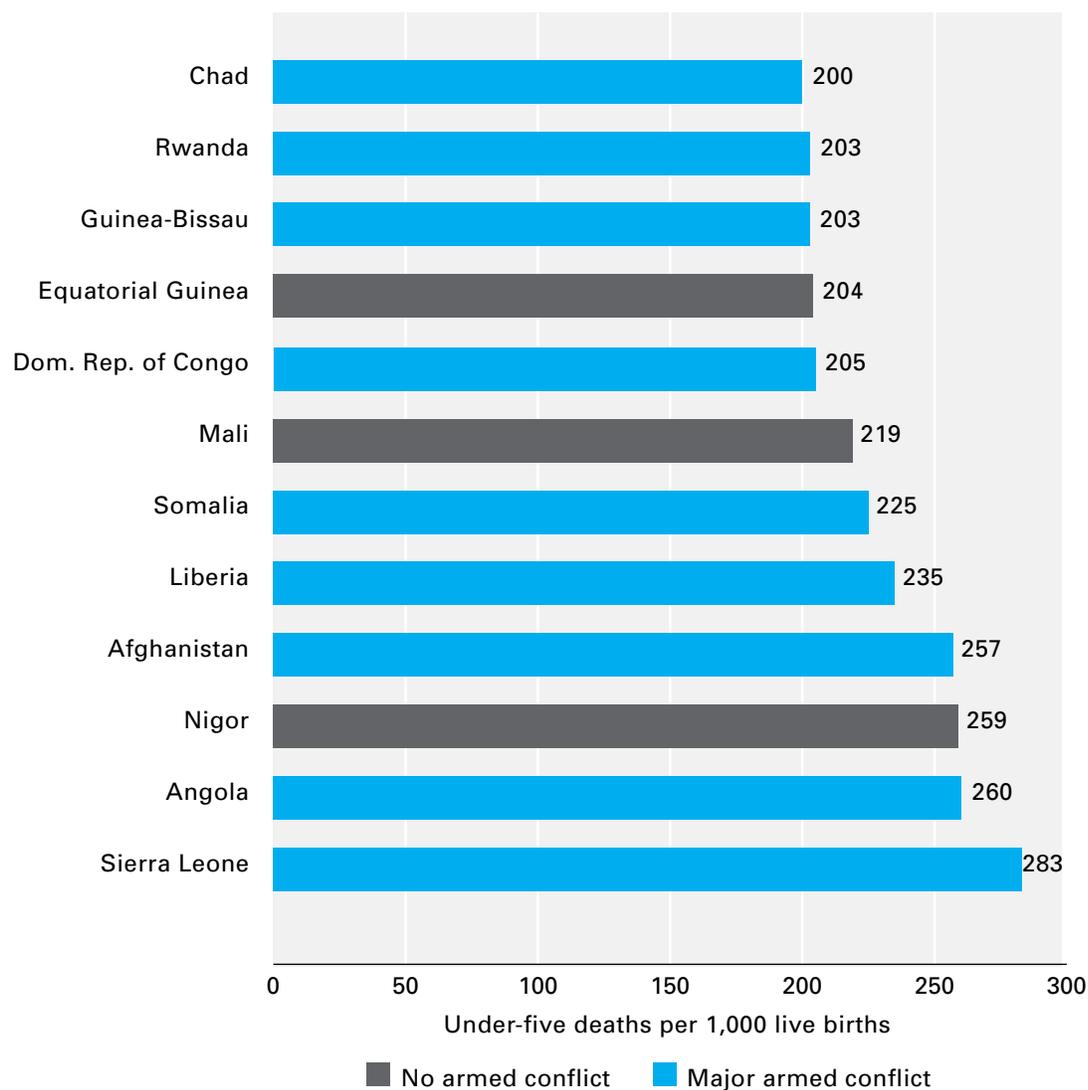
For more information about "School-In-A-Box," visit:

http://www.unicef.org/supply/kits_flash/schoolinabox/

<http://www.unicef.org/supply/files/TechBulletinSIB.pdf>

Child Mortality and Armed Conflict

Figure 2.3: Most of the countries where 1 in 5 children die before the age of five have experienced major armed conflict since 1999



Source: Data on Child Mortality: UNICEF, United Nations Population Division and United Nations Statistics Division; data on major armed conflicts: Stockholm International Research Institute SIPRI Yearbook 2005

The State of the World's Children, 2006, http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/figure2_3.pdf.

Elementary School Attendance Rates in Countries at War (1999-2004)

Country	Elementary School Attendance Rate: Boys	Elementary School Attendance Rate: Girls
Afghanistan	66%	40%
Angola	57%	59%
Chad	46%	33%
Democratic Republic of Congo	55%	49%
Guinea-Bissau	44%	38%
Liberia	59%	53%
Rwanda	75%	75%
Sierra Leone	43%	39%
Somalia	12%	10%
Average of all 9 countries		

Source: *The State of the World's Children*, 2006, www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/sowc06_table5.pdf

UNICEF at Work in War-Affected Countries

Afghanistan

War has gone on in Afghanistan for over 20 years. Following military action by the United States in 2001, a new government was formed. By 2002, 3 million children who had been out of school returned to classes. Of these, 30% were girls, who had not been allowed to go to school under the Taliban government. In 2007, about 6 million children were in school and nearly 40% of them were girls.

But armed conflict continues. In August 2006, UNICEF reported an increasing number of attacks on schools, including one missile attack, 11 explosions, 50 school burnings, and 37 threats against schools and communities. Six children have died as a result of the violence. Schools are beginning to close, shutting out an estimated 100,000 children.

UNICEF is working with Afghanistan's religious and community leaders to raise awareness of the importance of education, especially for girls. When attacks on schools occur, UNICEF provides classroom tents, teaching materials, blackboards, chalk and floor mats, in order to help schools open again as quickly as possible. It also works with the government on rebuilding schools and is helping to train 50,000 teachers in all subjects, including landmine awareness.

Over 25% of children in Afghanistan die before the age of five. UNICEF is working to immunize more than 4 million children under the age of five against measles, a leading cause of death. It also aims to immunize 4.2 million women against tetanus, which kills mothers and babies during childbirth. UNICEF is setting up health clinics and going door-to-door with immunizations in hard-to-reach parts of the country where travel is still dangerous because of armed conflict.

UNICEF is working with the government to help children orphaned by war. It is setting up day care centers, counseling, care homes for children without parents, educational opportunities and job training.

Source: adapted from, and for more information on UNICEF's work in Afghanistan, visit:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/afghanistan_35890.html

http://www.unicef.org/media/media_33948.html

<http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/e0973unicef.pdf>

UNICEF at Work in War-Affected Countries

Colombia

Forty years of conflict between the government and militias have caused many problems for Colombia's children. In the past 15 years, three million people (75% of them women and children) have had to leave their homes due to violence, lack safe water, health care and education. Despite a law that states children under age 18 cannot be part of the army, there are still 6,000 to 7,000 child soldiers in militias. Landmines are found not only in combat zones, but in school yards, near water sources and on rural roads. Landmines kill at least three people in Colombia each day.

UNICEF and its partners have:

- Provided emergency assistance—food, health kits and shelter—to thousands of people who have had to leave their homes because of violence.
- Helped to repair water and sanitation systems damaged by conflict and set up water and sanitation systems in areas where people are living in camps.
- Built schools in conflict-affected areas, giving thousands of out-of-school children the chance to continue their education.
- Worked with child soldiers. After getting them out of the armed forces, UNICEF has provided sports and other programs to over 19,000 children who used to be soldiers, giving them a new way of life. UNICEF helps them get shelter, job training, education, health care, counseling, legal protection and other services that help them re-join their communities.
- Educated tens of thousands of children on how to avoid landmine-related injuries. UNICEF also helped disabled landmine survivors by providing them with education, job training and other kinds of support needed to live in communities.
- Trained hundreds of teachers and therapists to provide psychological support for over 15,000 children who have been emotionally harmed by violence.

Source: adapted from, and for more information on UNICEF's work in Colombia, visit:

<http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/colombia.html>

http://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Armed_Groups.pdf

UNICEF at Work in War-Affected Countries

Lebanon

During the conflict between Israel and Lebanon in the summer of 2006, UNICEF worked to get supplies to war-affected Lebanese families. Supplies included health kits, mattresses, blankets, buckets and soap. Water and sanitation systems were damaged during the war and UNICEF provided bottled water and water purification kits. UNICEF is now working to set up large water tanks that will replace the use of bottled water.

UNICEF also provided essential medicines. It started an immunization campaign aimed at protecting children, many of them living in crowded shelters, from measles.

In addition, UNICEF provided games and sports equipment for children who had to leave their homes and were living in shelters, which offered little opportunities for play.

Following the cease-fire, it is estimated that up to 50 schools were destroyed and 300 were damaged. UNICEF is working to re-open damaged schools, providing supplies, teaching materials and helping with the re-building. Not only do schools provide children education, they give them the feeling that life is returning to normal.

Counseling groups are being set up to help children deal with the stress of losing their homes or family members. These groups will provide sports, art and other activities that will help children express their feelings and identify children who may need extra counseling.

UNICEF is also working to inform adults and children about the danger of landmines and unexploded munitions.

Source: adapted from, and for more information on UNICEF's work in Lebanon, visit:

http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_35145.html

http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_35640.html

http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_35455.html

http://www.unicef.org/emerg/index_35274.html

UNICEF at Work in War-Affected Countries

Timor-Lesté (formerly East Timor)

On May 20, 2002, Timor-Lesté (or East Timor) became the world's newest country. This followed a long struggle for independence from Indonesia that damaged up to 70% of all buildings in the country. Health services were heavily damaged during the conflict and many children in Timor-Lesté suffer from malnutrition and die at an early age. Immunization rates are low. At the time of independence, only 20% of people living outside of cities had safe water, and only 10% had good sanitation facilities. Nearly all schools needed repairs to both the latrines and water systems following the crisis.

Since independence, UNICEF has worked to increase immunization rates, improve nutrition, provide water and sanitation to villages and schools, and improve the quality of schools. However, in the summer of 2006, new conflict broke out. Many people in the capital city, Dili, left and are living in camps, where many children are malnourished.

UNICEF is providing food to children in camps who are malnourished. It is also providing water, water containers and water purification tablets to camps.

In addition, emergency classes have been set up for children who had to leave school. UNICEF is providing support to schools in rural areas that are overcrowded because of children escaping Dili.

Music, dance and art activities have been planned in camps to help children cope with stress. Kits providing games and sports equipment give children something positive to do with their time.

Source: adapted from, and for more information on UNICEF's work in Timor-Lesté, visit:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/Timorleste_35194.html

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/Timorleste_34806.html

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/Timorleste_34712.html

Name of country:			
What UNICEF did when the conflict first started		What UNICEF did later in the conflict	What UNICEF did when the conflict was over:

