

UNICEF's Priorities for Children 2002-2005

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

unicef 

2002

2005

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This overview is adapted from UNICEF's Medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for the period 2002-2005. The full text is available as UNICEF Executive Board document ICEF/2001/13 and Corr. 1.

Second Edition

UNICEF's five priorities

WE WILL

The results

UNICEF has committed its resources to achieving results for children in the following five priority areas:

- ▶ We will work to ensure that every girl and every boy completes a quality primary school education
- ▶ We will work to promote integrated early childhood development, ensuring every child the best possible start in life
- ▶ We will work to safeguard every child against disease and disability, emphasizing immunization 'plus'....
- ▶ We will work to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and ensure that children and young people already affected by the disease are cared for
- ▶ And we will work to protect every child so that all children can grow up free from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination

We will maintain our focus on these five priorities in all circumstances including conflicts, emergencies and natural disasters. And, throughout the organization, we will link our daily activities and our planning to achieving specific goals for children in these five areas.

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It is our belief that gains for children in these five areas will contribute significantly to the full realization of children's rights. And that progress in each area will contribute to progress in others, creating a dynamic for breaking cycles of poverty, violence, discrimination and impaired human development.

This decision to prioritize and focus our efforts means that we will have to phase out some existing projects and forgo some new ones. But we are confident that this is the framework that will allow us to have the biggest impact on the lives of children and young people.

Our organizing framework

**WORLD FIT
FOR CHILDREN**

What's more, the framework also enables us to help build 'A World Fit for Children' and contribute to achieving the global goals of the UN Millennium Declaration and other international agreements. We will continue to be guided, in all our strategies and actions, by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its optional protocols and other international standards for protecting children's rights.

Building on more than 55 years of experience, UNICEF is organizing its programmes, partnerships, alliances, advocacy work and internal operations – at the country and regional levels and in headquarters – around these five organizational priorities.

Within every UNICEF office, we will work to expose and rectify disparities and all forms of discrimination against children and women, and focus our interventions on disadvantaged populations and on children and adolescents at risk.

Our work in the five priority areas will be nuanced by local realities and the specific situations for children. But everywhere, the UNICEF logo will stand for a trusted partner, organizational excellence and a credible source of expertise on children that is based on analysis, practical experience and advances in girls' education, integrated early childhood development, immunization 'plus', fighting HIV/AIDS and protecting children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination.

We will build our capacity in relation to the five priorities in order to succeed in getting results for children. As needed, we will retrain ourselves, recruit new colleagues, expand our alliances and extend our partnerships.

We will raise the money that will allow us to address the overall needs of children in the five priority areas. We will spend our funds in ways that allow country programmes to build their networks and develop their partnerships for the long haul, as well as for emergencies.

The context of our plan

Raison d'être

RESULTS

We will use our global reach, our international perspective and the confidence of our General Assembly mandate to be an effective voice for the protection of the world's children.

We will work with governments, international and national organizations, United Nations agencies, NGOs, community-based organizations, local authorities and the private sector, as well as with religious and cultural groups, community leaders, the general public, families, children and young people.

In short, given the opportunity, UNICEF will work with all those who share our vision and values, and our commitment to the rights of every child.

The plan for 2002-2005 has not come out of the blue.

UNICEF has nearly six decades of practical experience and a deep reservoir of accumulated expertise in each of the priority areas from the 162 countries, areas and territories in which we work.

We have the added benefit of the end-decade reviews covering 1990–2000 on international and national efforts on behalf of children, with detailed reports from 155 countries, covering more than three quarters of the world's children.

In essence, our plan for the next four years is the application of the lessons learned from our past.

In the end, UNICEF will be judged by our contributions to building a world where each and every child enjoys the full extent of each and every right. As we begin this next stage in our history, it is our belief that focusing on these five priorities – girls' education, integrated early childhood development, immunization 'plus', HIV/AIDS and protection – will help us most effectively live up to our responsibilities to the children of the world.

The measure of our success will be the results we achieve.

CERC

In a world fit for children

- 1 | Governments, private groups and civil society achieve social and economic development and human rights for all.
- 2 | Leaders use their power and influence to assure that every child enjoys the rights and opportunities to grow and develop in dignity, security and self-fulfilment.
- 3 | The Convention on the Rights of the Child guides law, attitudes, policies and programmes. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women does the same.
- 4 | Governance at every level and in all its aspects ensures
 - ▶ the best interests of the child
 - ▶ non-discrimination
 - ▶ the survival and development of children
 - ▶ the participation of children.

UNICEF on women

CEDAW

Because

- 1 | UNICEF is committed to support the equal rights of women and girls, viewing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as complementary to the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- 2 | The right of women to participate in decisions that affect them is central to the realization of the rights of children; and
- 3 | The rights, equality and empowerment of women are especially important to healthy child development and to building healthy families, communities and nations;

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UNICEF will

- 1 | Support women's full participation and empowerment in the community and within their families; and
- 2 | Work to end violence against women, particularly violence within their families.

FOR CHILDREN

The priorities

- 1 | Girls' education
- 2 | Early childhood
- 3 | Immunization 'plus'
- 4 | Fighting HIV/AIDS
- 5 | Protecting children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination.

BREAKING THE CYCLE

Why these five priorities?

- ▶ They contribute directly to fulfilling a great many of each child's rights.
- ▶ They leverage a great many other rights.
- ▶ They are interlinked – progress in one contributes to progress in others.
- ▶ Together, they create a dynamic for breaking the cycle of poverty and impaired human development.
- ▶ They are where we believe we can generate and harness the political will and the supporting partnerships and alliances for the benefit of children.
- ▶ They are where UNICEF can make the biggest impact on the lives of children.

Success depends on

Holding ourselves accountable

RESULTS

Effective country programmes of cooperation will continue as the core of our efforts, the essential factor in our success.

In addition, success will depend on

- ▶ the excellence of our programming
- ▶ the quality of our partnerships
- ▶ the quality of our information, communication and advocacy
- ▶ the excellence of our internal management and operations.

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We know that UNICEF cannot do everything that needs to be done for children and that we cannot work alone. But we also know that we are accountable to do all that we can to change the world to serve the best interests of the child.

Our planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting – country, regional and headquarters – will address the five organizational priorities. The Executive Director will report to UNICEF’s Executive Board on results achieved against the five organizational priorities. And these results will be the core of our internal and public communications.

Priority 1

EQUALITY

What needs to be done:

Results by 2005:

Girls' education

Quality education for girls equals quality education for boys. Education for girls helps them and their future children. Girls and women are enabled to fulfil their potential. Fewer women will die in pregnancy and childbirth unnecessarily. Fewer infants will die. More children will be better nourished and healthier all around. Families will have additional income. More women will marry later and more will have fewer children. More women will serve in leadership roles. More women will be involved in financial decision-making. More women will contribute to social policy. More girls and more women will enjoy the full range of their rights.

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- ▶ Get all girls into school
 - ▶ Help all girls stay in school
 - ▶ Ensure that all girls learn what they need to succeed.

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- ▶ Thirty per cent fewer girls will be out of school
 - ▶ The quality of schools will improve in at least 50 countries
 - ▶ Progress in learning outcomes and gender parity.

Priority 2

What needs to be done:

Results by 2005:

**BEST START
IN LIFE**

Early childhood

Ensuring a child the best start in life depends on an integrated approach to early childhood care and development. Such a start lays the foundation for ensuring all other rights. This integrated approach requires inputs from health, including women's health, nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, psycho-social care and early learning and child protection. Immediate benefits: child survival, healthy growth, healthy development, less disease, fewer illnesses. Mid-term benefits: a child's thinking and language skills, emotional and social skills, school readiness and self-esteem. Subsequent benefits: success in school and later in life as an active member of society.

- ▶ Focus most intensely on children under three years old
- ▶ Strengthen the capacities of families to care for children, especially those most vulnerable
- ▶ Increase the access of families and communities to good-quality basic services and adequate livelihoods
- ▶ Promote gender equality and ensure the rights and status of women
- ▶ Strengthen and integrate national policies for the young child.

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- ▶ Reduction in infant and child mortality rates
 - ▶ Healthier infants and children under five
 - ▶ In 80-100 countries with the greatest needs and/or greatest disparities, implementation of integrated approaches to service delivery that fulfil all the rights of the young child.
 - ▶ More effective birth registration systems for both boys and girls
 - ▶ Improved care practices of families and communities in every country
 - ▶ More children under three in good-quality community or group childcare.

Priority 3

What needs to be done:

Results by 2005:

**CHILD
SURVIVAL**

Immunization 'plus'

Immunizations and micronutrient supplementation save millions of lives every year. Almost every child can be reached with vaccines and supplements, even under the most difficult conditions. Immunization and micronutrient supplementation have a high impact on the health of entire populations. They are affordable and cost-effective. They help families and communities improve childcare practices. They strengthen primary health care systems and can control disease outbreaks.

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- ▶ Save all infants and all children under five from preventable deaths and disabilities
 - ▶ Prevent the spread of childhood diseases
 - ▶ Get all childhood vaccines to all children
 - ▶ Use immunization 'plus' as an entry point for other health interventions.
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- ▶ 80 per cent immunization coverage in every district in 80 per cent of countries
 - ▶ No polio, anywhere
 - ▶ Deaths from measles cut by half
 - ▶ Elimination of maternal and neonatal tetanus
 - ▶ Twice as many countries with adequate vitamin A coverage.

Priority 4

What needs to be done:

Results by 2005:

SAVING LIVES

Fighting HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is among the most significant threats to fulfilling the rights of children and women. No region is safe from its spread. HIV/AIDS exacerbates poverty, malnutrition, armed conflict, gender inequities and sexual exploitation. HIV/AIDS exhausts the resources of families, communities and government services. HIV infections can be prevented. The ways and means exist to provide care, support and protection for those who are affected by HIV/AIDS.

- ▶ Prevent HIV infections among young people
 - ▶ Prevent parent-to-child transmission of HIV
 - ▶ Expand care for children and parents living with HIV and AIDS
 - ▶ Expand protection, care and support for orphans and children affected by HIV/AIDS.
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- ▶ Complete impact analyses of HIV/AIDS, disaggregated by gender and age, for every country
 - ▶ National policies, strategies and action plans implemented in all countries affected by HIV/AIDS
 - to reduce risks for young people
 - to prevent parent-to-child transmission of HIV
 - to ensure protection and care for children orphaned by or vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

Priority 5

What needs to be done:

Results by 2005:

**HUMAN
DIGNITY**

Protecting children from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination

Protection is a universal imperative and the right of every child. Violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation threaten children throughout their life. Children, including those born healthy, and young people are more vulnerable than adults to being hurt, neglected, abused and exploited. Their survival is at risk and their full development compromised. Millions of abused and exploited children suffer out of sight as violence against children occurs within families, in schools and communities and in institutions.

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- ▶ Build a 'protective environment' for children that fortifies them against abuse and exploitation in the way that good nutrition and good health care fortifies them against disease.
 - Get the facts for each country
 - Implement laws, policies and programmes that protect children
 - Prevent violence and abuse by supporting families and communities
 - Mitigate the impact of violence through recovery and reintegration programmes.

 - ▶ A strong and protective environment for children that will
 - Reduce violence against children
 - Eliminate the worst forms of child labour
 - Increase protection for children in armed conflict
 - End discrimination in all its forms.
 - Set the mechanisms in place for family- and community-based care for all children without primary caregivers.

LEADERSHIP

“We must put the best interests of children at the heart of all political and business decision-making, and at the centre of our day-to-day behaviour and activities.”

*Kofi A. Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations*

“Each of us has the opportunity to demonstrate leadership as we go about the everyday business of our lives by taking the extra moment to ask: ‘How does this decision, this choice, affect the lives of children?’”

*Carol Bellamy
Executive Director of UNICEF*

For more information on MTSP,
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Published by UNICEF
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Second Edition
November 2002