



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **UNICEF welcomes National Strategy on registration of all children in Indonesia by 2011**

Jakarta, 18 December 2008

UNICEF welcomes the "National Strategy on Birth Registration: All Children are registered by 2011," prioritizing children under five years of age, which was launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs on 12 December. This national strategy is an important step to ensure that every child counts. According to the Inter-Censal Survey 2005, 60% of children under five years of age were not officially registered. Although born in Indonesia of Indonesian parents, these children have no nationality and no legal identity.

Birth registration laid the fundamental of child rights. It ensures the existence of every child in the development process and guarantees their social protection. Children who are not registered at birth are vulnerable to be deprived of their rights and subject to exploitation including trafficking.

Head of the Child Protection Unit in UNICEF Indonesia, Ms. Jasmina Byrne, said "birth registration is a crucial first step in building a culture of protection. Without birth registration, children's access to basic social services such as education and health care may be at risk. Birth registration helps prevent under-age recruitment and child labour and aids the fight against trafficking and sale of children."

Indonesia ranks in the bottom 20 countries of the world in its registration of children and the problem is worse in rural areas. This disparity is among the highest in the world. There are many factors affecting the low rate of registration, ranging from the lack of community awareness on the importance to registering birth, the high cost for registration, complex procedure and lack of access to services usually located at districts.

The launch of the national strategy on birth registration calls to all members of the society on the importance of registering the birth of their children. The Law 23/2006 on the Population Administration reaffirmed Indonesia's commitment for universal birth registration stipulated under the Law 23/2002 on the Child Protection.

Dr. Rasyid Saleh, Director General on Population Administration, Ministry of Home Affairs, said "The national strategy represents the Government of Indonesia's commitment to children. Through this strategic plan, we hope that all children are registered, and the quality of our birth registration improves along with increased community participation."

Currently, about 65% of all districts and cities in Indonesia have adopted local regulation on "free of charge" birth registration. However, until now there is no official figure on the annual rate of birth registration making it difficult to assess the impact of the national law and local regulations.

In collaboration with the ministry of Home Affairs, UNICEF supported the national awareness raising campaigns through local and national media, capacity building of policy makers from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, academicians, selected district and provincial registrars, and members of the Consortium on Civil Registrations as well as in strengthening pilot models for comprehensive birth registration.

For further information, please contact

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