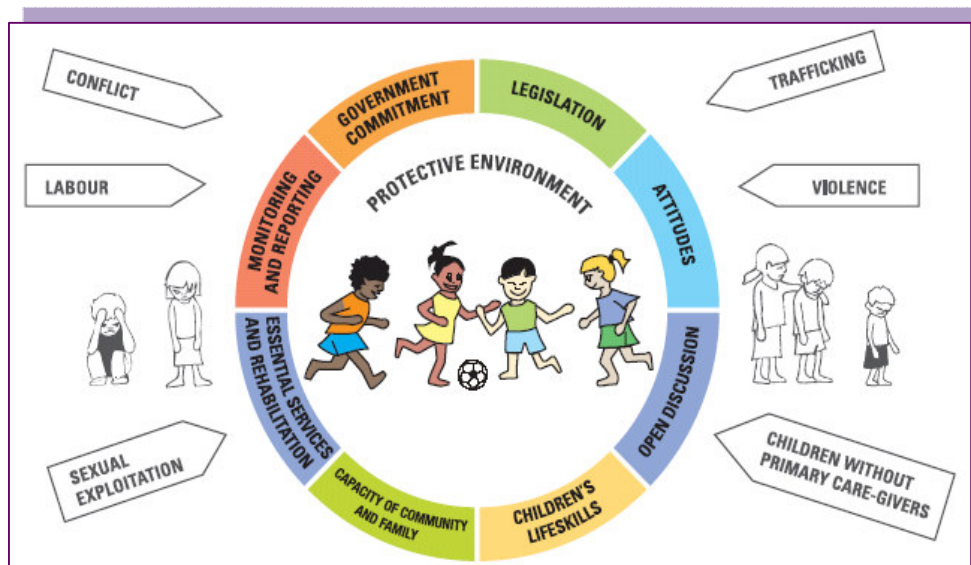


STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN! CHILD PROTECTION AND THE MILLENNIUM DECLARATION

THE MILLENNIUM DECLARATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- To strive for the full protection and promotion in all our countries of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for all
- To combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- To encourage the ratification and full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

THE BIG PICTURE: CHILD PROTECTION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



- Preventing and addressing violence, abuse, and exploitation is part of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- The Protective Environment approach emphasises support to a range of commitments, policies, attitudes and institutions which are prerequisites to good governance and a healthy civil society. All eight elements¹ in this diagram are integral to the advancement of human development and the Millennium Declaration.

¹ Legislation and Enforcement, Protective Attitudes and Practices, Open Discussion, Children's Life skills, Capacity and Awareness of those closest to the child, Services, including for prevention and recovery, Monitoring and Reporting, and Government Commitment

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS + CHILD PROTECTION

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

- Children who live in extreme poverty are often those who experience violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination.
- In the immediate term, poverty lessens the chances they will enjoy a protective environment. In the long run, the effect of child protection abuses on poverty is cyclical.
- If children are abused, their marginalisation decreases the likelihood that they will escape poverty for themselves and their families as they enter adulthood.

Birth Registration: Without documents to prove birth registration, children and families cannot often access health, education and other social services. States cannot plan poverty alleviation and social service programs without accurate estimates of yearly births.

Child Labour: Child labour squanders a nation's human capital. It is both a cause and consequence of poverty.

Children in Conflict with the Law: The Convention on the Rights of the Child and other Human Rights instruments make clear that children accused of crimes are entitled to treatment which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society. When this is not done, their likelihood of poverty and marginalisation in adulthood rises.

Abandonment and Separation from Family: Poverty and exclusion contribute to child abandonment, sending children to work on the street or in other environments away from home, and to the use of formal and informal fostering arrangements as well as institutional care. While some of these strategies sometimes may address the child or the families short term economic needs, they can also lead to poor child development, leaving children ill-prepared to deal with adulthood, and a greater likelihood of continuing the cycle of poverty.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

- Universal primary education cannot be achieved without efforts to eliminate the barriers that keep children out of school: child labour, violence in schools, discrimination, and over-use of institutions.
- Reaching the hard-to-reach is critical to achieving education for all.
- Ensuring that children attend school with qualified staff can help prevent and address child protection abuses.

Child Labour: Child labour can impede the education of children.

Violence: The school environment needs to be free of violence if children are to be encouraged to attend and remain in school. Sexual violence and harassment facing girls at school is a major impediment to achieving gender equality in education. Eliminating corporal punishment and other forms of violence including bullying, peer violence and sexual abuse are key to ensuring a safe and protective learning environment for children.

Child Marriage: Girls face economic and cultural pressures to drop out of school to get married.

Exclusion: Many vulnerable groups subject to discrimination need to be taken into account in reaching this target, including children affected by HIV and AIDS, orphans, children with disabilities, children engaged in armed conflict and those trafficked, minorities and children of migrant families.

Children without Parental Care: Ensuring that children who are not able to live with their families are placed in the most appropriate family environment increases the likelihood that they will attend and benefit from school.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS + CHILD PROTECTION

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

- Child marriage, sexual violence, female genital mutilation/cutting and child labour prevent girls from enjoying gender equality.
- They must be prevented and addressed as part of global initiatives to empower women.

Child Marriage: Girls face economic and cultural pressures to drop out of school, and may not have opportunities to participate in community events and other matters that affect their lives.

Sexual Violence: Widespread sexual violence mainly against women and girls, undermines efforts to empower them. During armed conflict situations, girls often have less access to reintegration programs for former child soldiers and other affected groups.

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Female genital mutilation/cutting is an infringement on the physical and psychosexual integrity of women.

Child Labour: Girls are disproportionately engaged in domestic work which often compromises their school participation.

Trafficking: Trafficking in women and girls is a severe impediment to their human rights and empowerment.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

- Extreme exploitation, violence or abuse can lead to child deaths, both under the age of five and throughout childhood.

Child Marriage: Babies who are born to very young mothers are more vulnerable to diseases during critical early years of life. Young mothers are themselves still children, and their own health is endangered during pregnancy and childbirth.

Violence: Violence against children can lead in extreme cases to death.

Abandonment and Separation from Caregivers: Children separated from their mother at an early age, especially those who remain in institutional settings for an extended period of time, are at much greater risk of early death

Disability: inattention to disability increases children's risk of poor functioning as they grow, and also increases mortality risk.

Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

- Abuses against adolescent girls endanger their physical and psychological health as well as their reproductive health as mothers.

Child Marriage: Protecting girls from early marriage is an important factor in improving maternal health as pregnancy at a young age jeopardises the health of young mothers.

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: One of the many negative health implications of female genital mutilation/cutting is the increased chance of maternal mortality during delivery.

Sexual Violence: Widespread sexual violence in conflict has a direct impact on maternal mortality, in particular when combined with high levels of HIV prevalence among combatants.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS + CHILD PROTECTION

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

- The fight against HIV and AIDS must include efforts to prevent child protection abuses which make children particularly vulnerable to the disease. For children orphaned or otherwise made vulnerable by HIV, protection is a key priority.

Worst forms of Child Labour: Many of the worst forms of child labour fuel the spread of HIV as children are exploited in prostitution, soldiering and trafficking. Children from families and communities affected by HIV and AIDS are particularly vulnerable to these forms of exploitation

Sexual Abuse and Exploitation: Protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation can play an important part in both ensuring the protection of children affected by HIV and AIDS and preventing infection amongst all young people.

Children without Parental Care: Children in HIV and AIDS affected families are particularly at risk of losing the care and protection of their families. Ensuring that they remain within the most appropriate family environment is key to their protection and well-being.

Children in Conflict with the Law: Reducing recourse to detention is a stated objective of Human Rights instruments dealing with juvenile justice. This will also have the positive effect of reducing their vulnerability to infection, given the high rates of transmission in prisons.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Partnerships for Child Protection:

- Child Protection demands inter-sectoral cooperation at the national and international level. UNICEF's approach entails creating a protective environment for children.
- This means partnering with government, civil society, the private sector and UN and international NGO partners to improve systems, capacities, services attitudes and laws to better protect children.