

## MEDIA RELEASE

### UNICEF HOSTS FIRST NATIONAL SEMINAR ON SOCIAL PROTECTION FOCUSING ON VULNERABLE CHILDREN

*Seminar "first step" in introduction of social protection in Myanmar*

YANGON, 04 December 2008 – Today marks the final day of the launch of first ever national seminar on Social Protection focusing on vulnerable children. The three day seminar hosted by UNICEF and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement was attended by more than 70 participants from government ministries, community-based organisations, national and international NGOs and UN Agencies.

This seminar was an introduction of general concepts of social protection, as well as giving opportunity for participants to discuss specific social protection strategies and approaches applicable to vulnerable children in Myanmar.

"Today's and tomorrow's children are the future of Myanmar and the investment in social protection programmes to protect children is not only to their benefit, but an investment in the future of Myanmar" said UNICEF Representative in Myanmar Ramesh Shrestha.

The seminar was facilitated by experts from both Myanmar and abroad and provided global and regional perspectives on social protection and participants explored the current situation of social protection in Myanmar.

During the three day seminar, types of social protection; the design and implementation of social protection programmes and the appropriateness of cash transfer programme, financial implementation and affordability in Myanmar were discussed.

The highlights of the seminar also included presentations on the ways in which the implementation of social protection policies can protect children and family under poverty groups while supporting long term growth and development procedures.

At the end of the seminar participants gained an improved understanding of social protection concepts and approaches, along with a clearer idea of the practicalities of introducing social protection programmes in Myanmar and the benefits they can bring, especially to children.

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The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides that all children have the right to be protected from abuse, exploitation and neglect. Myanmar ratified the CRC in 1991.

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