

# **MOLO** **songololo**

## **UNICEF Process**

### **Children's participation in State of the Worlds children 2006 Report**



## **Title**

### **Invisible & Excluded children**

# Statement from Children

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2006

## Re: Launch of UNICEF State of the Worlds Children Report

On behalf of the children from Molo Songololo Atlantis & Kenilworth; Concerned Parents of Missing Children, Cape Town Refugee Forum; ASTRA school for the disabled; Beth Uriel for previously homeless children; ISANGO institute; Mountview Secondary school; we greet you and make this following statement concerning the State of the World's Children Report launched by UNICEF today.

For the past few days Molo Songololo brought us, children from different backgrounds and communities in and around Cape Town together to discuss the situation of children across the world and the UNICEF Report 2006, namely Excluded and invisible children.

The following are our comments.

### **It is our right to be respected**

We believe that we have human rights and that our rights need to be respected and protected. We are concerned that many governments and those people who have duties and are supposed to help and assist children, do not know and respect our rights.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, states, that governments must respect our rights, and make sure that they develop policies, programmes and make resources available to realize the rights of children.

We are pleased that UNICEF and other organisations work in our interest and promote our rights, development and protection. The annual UNICEF Report on the State of the Worlds Children 2006 is a clear record of world governments' progress and failures to implement their own targets to create development, stability and peace in the world.

### **Invisible Children**

This year's report title clearly describe for us the attitude of most governments the world over; that children are invisible to them and that in some cases the actions of governments are a direct threat to children. The invisible children are those children who are

- Neglected and abandoned
- Homeless and living on the street
- Who go missing and those who are abducted

- Abused, exploited and forced to work
- Sexually exploited, prostituted and used in pornography; Those trafficked, bought and sold
- Those who die of preventable diseases and HIV/AIDS
- Those who are refugees and victims of violence and war
- Orphans

These children also include those who go hungry, starve and do not have access to clean drinking water. It also includes those children who are illegally adopted and those who are forced to fend for themselves and their brothers and sisters. And it includes those children who are addicted to alcohol and drugs and are involved in gangs. It also includes children in prisons cells and jails.

And it includes those children who are forced to undergo harmful practices and rituals because of culture and religion.

It also includes the children who's voices are not heard and who are discriminated against because of their race, class, colour, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion or disability.

The invisible children includes children from Africa, children from North and South America, children from Europe and the Middle East, children from Russia and China, children from India and South East Asia and children from the Australia and the Pacific.

### **A Global Commitment**

We are pleased to note that the United Nations Member countries have committed themselves to the Millennium Development Goals to make the world a safer and better world; by the year 2015.

#### **These goals include:**

- reducing poverty by half
- education for all children
- create development and jobs
- Reduce child deaths for those under 5-year
- Halt and reduce HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases
- Provide access to affordable drugs and medicine
- Empower girls and women and promote gender equality
- Assist and support poor countries

We commend those adults and governments who have made a real effort to realize these goals for us as children and future generations. However, as much as the report states that in some areas improvements have been made, we the children gathered here believe that much more could have been achieved.

## Our issues of concern and recommendations for world governments

### Group 1

- Poverty
- Weak governance
- Armed conflict

Issues of concern	Recommendations
<p><b>Poverty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unemployment</li> <li>- hunger</li> <li>- lack of opportunities</li> <li>- lack of access to services</li> <li>- <b>deprivation of rights</b></li> <li>- unequal opportunities</li> <li>- Prostitution</li> <li>- Child Labour</li> <li>- High crime rate because because of the unemployment rate</li> <li>- That leads to illegal practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitor resource allocation to children</li> <li>• Instead of grant system, provide parents with a voucher system to ensure children's monies are not misused for alcohol and other things.</li> <li>• Others in the group felt that government need to move a way from "grants" to play a more empowerment role – train people; impart skills so that people become self reliant, instead of people being dependent</li> <li>• Only provide a voucher system to children who are orphaned</li> <li>• Increase the age to 18 according to SA constitution</li> <li>• Children needs are different take each and every child's experience into account when allocating funds</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weak governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- corruption</li> <li>- political instability</li> <li>- natural disasters e.g. Tsunami</li> <li>- lack of services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance are not up to standard especially around delivery services to children</li> <li>• interministerial watchdogs for each department: this should consist out of: heads of key committees- these committees heads act as an interministerial watch dog...looks at the following issues related to children: - - - - mainstreaming children issues across departments</li> <li>• proper budgeting within departments</li> <li>• greater cooperation between government &amp; civil society</li> <li>• government must account for non delivery of services towards children</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to services too children must be prioritized</li> <li>• government should provide emergency back up plan in case natural disasters</li> <li>• should distribute equally</li> <li>• greater transparency</li> </ul>
<p><b>Armed conflict</b></p> <p><b>gangsterism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- children on the Cape Flats &amp; else where children are forced into gangs against their will</li> <li>- children used to commit crime &amp; are involved in illegal activities</li> <li>- children missing out on life time opportunities e.g. education; recreation; development</li> <li>- endangering children's lives</li> <li>- children exposed to violence</li> </ul> <p><b>armed conflict</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children illegally recruited into the army in other African countries</li> <li>- Unable to attend school</li> <li>- Suffer psychological effects after the war</li> <li>- Girl children often face sexual exploitation &amp; abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• declare war against gansterism</li> <li>• take a tougher stand against corruption &amp; maladministration</li> <li>• increase child protection &amp; safety</li> <li>• increase peace efforts in war torn &amp; conflict ridden areas</li> <li>• step up the implementation of the African charter</li> </ul>

**Group 2**

- HIV/AIDS
- Discrimination
- Lack of birth registration

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<p><b>HIV/AIDS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Used condoms not properly disposed. increases children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age restriction for condom issuing</li> <li>• Think prevention</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- risk of contracting the disease</li> <li>- Awareness campaigns not effective...preach abstinence</li> <li>- Availability of condoms</li> <li>- Unwanted pregnancies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More aggressive awareness campaigns...sends out strong messages...with warnings</li> <li>• Highlight the consequences</li> <li>• Government should assist in developing &amp; enhancing parental skills</li> <li>• Parental guidance</li> <li>• Greater focus on the management of the disease</li> </ul>
<p><b>Discrimination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self esteem; child abuse results into invisible</li> <li>- Children with disabilities</li> <li>- Racism</li> <li>- Gender</li> <li>- Religion; culture; backgrounds</li> <li>- Stigma for those living with HIV/AIDS</li> <li>- Forced marriages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- education begins at home-teach tolerance &amp; respect</li> <li>- more facilities for children with disabilities</li> <li>- promote cultural diversity</li> <li>- Greater focus on de stigmatizing those living with diseases such HIV/AIDS/TB</li> <li>- Government intervention where children are forced to marry against their will</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of birth registration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- children not registered at birth</li> <li>- children unable to access services such as grant or protection</li> <li>- unable to attend school</li> <li>- limits child opportunities</li> <li>- child lacks identity; nationality</li> <li>- <i>"Does not exist"</i></li> <li>- <i>"does not belong"</i></li> <li>- <i>"feels lost"</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having a child's identity officially registered is a fundamental human rights</li> <li>- compulsory registration at birth in hospitals</li> <li>-</li> </ul>

**Group 3**

- Children without care givers
- Premature entry into adulthood
- Exploitation

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
Children without care givers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- drug abuse</li> <li>- child abuse &amp; rape</li> <li>- discrimination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- greater support offered by government to family</li> <li>- reduce poverty &amp; unemployment</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- child labour</li> <li>- unemployment</li> <li>- lack of parental guidance</li> <li>- racism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- child abuse &amp; rape- bring back the death penalty as a deterrent</li> </ul>
<p><b>Premature entry into adulthood</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- child labour</li> <li>- at risk &amp; vulnerable</li> <li>- teenage pregnancy</li> <li>- teenage marriage</li> <li>- poverty</li> <li>- denying children the right to play &amp; access to their rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government to take the issue of child prostitution serious</li> <li>- Poverty reduction &amp; eradication</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exploitation</b></p> <p>Trafficked &amp; exploited children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- peer pressure</li> <li>- isolated( invisible)</li> <li>- restriction of freedom of movement</li> <li>- no freedom of expression</li> <li>- unable to access services</li> <li>- no support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- door to door campaigns</li> <li>- promote awareness campaigns around human rights</li> <li>- put in place services for trafficked &amp; exploited children</li> <li>- reduce poverty</li> <li>- create job opportunities &amp; skills development</li> </ul>