

# UNICEF THAILAND AT A GLANCE

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







UNICEF  
IS THE  
UNITED  
NATIONS  
CHILDREN'S  
FUND

We are unique among world organizations and unique among those working with young people.

We have the authority to influence decision makers and the diversity of partners to turn the most innovative ideas into reality.

Around the world, we use our expertise to meet the challenges facing children and those who care for them.

Our history has given us a profound understanding of development and how important children are to progress.

All that we do helps children realize their full potential.

WHO  
ARE  
WE?

## WHO ARE WE?

**UNICEF** is the United Nations Children's Fund, which has more than 8,000 staff members working in 191 countries and territories around the world.

UNICEF began providing assistance to Thailand in 1948 and we have been working ever since to improve the well-being of all children in Thailand.

**UNICEF in Thailand** has more than 50 people striving to promote and protect the rights of children in Thailand. Ten of our staff members are based in Phuket, working with our government and NGO partners to respond to the special needs of children in the six provinces hit by the December 2004 tsunami.

We advocate for children's rights and run programmes that help children to survive and thrive.

These programmes cover education, HIV/AIDS, child protection and the promotion of children's rights and monitoring and policy analysis.

UNICEF works with and through all levels of government and a huge variety of other partners, including NGOs, faith-based groups, other UN agencies, the private sector and children themselves.

Our global experience and mandate allow us to influence and support decision makers to turn innovative ideas into reality. Our expertise and commitment help Thailand meet the challenges facing children and those who care for them.

WHAT

DO

WE

STAND

FOR?

## WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

Every child is born with rights.

Every child has the right to health and proper health care, the right to an education and the right to a nationality.

Every child has the right to be protected from abuse and neglect.

Every child has the right to participate in matters that affect them and the right to be treated equally.

These rights are among those set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Thailand acceded to in 1992.

The Convention has become the most widely accepted human rights treaty in history. It is a measure of the world's commitment to children.

In line with this commitment, we work towards achieving the Millennium Development Declaration and its Goals.

WHAT

DO

WE

DO?

Help children develop to their full potential

Create a safe and protective environment

Keep children safe from HIV/AIDS

Give children the best possible education

Keep children's rights and concerns at the forefront of national and local policies

Give children a voice

Protect children in emergencies

Mobilize the private sector



## HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

We work to ensure that children are given every opportunity they need for full mental and physical development. This includes adequate nutrition, a loving and supportive family, mental stimulation and a safe and peaceful environment.

We campaign to ensure that all children are registered at birth so that they can enjoy full protection under the law and full access to health care and education services. Particularly in isolated border areas, we raise awareness among families and officials of the importance of birth registration and every child's right to a name and nationality.

We encourage exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life as the best way to make sure that children get the nutrients they need to grow strong.

We campaign for all households to use iodized salt in order to combat iodine deficiency disorders that can range from goitre to the more common reduction of a child's intelligence quotient (IQ).

This means advocating for regulations that would mandate the production and sale of iodized salt for human consumption and lobbying manufacturers to comply with existing regulations.

We even care for children in their mothers' wombs, because a newborn child's well-being depends upon his or her mother's health. To this end we provide pregnant women with the information they need to ensure adequate nutrition and safe delivery; and we support the national programme to prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS from mother to child.



## CREATE A SAFE AND PROTECTIVE ENVIRONMENT

We work with government to create laws that prevent the abuse and exploitation of children – and to make sure those laws are enforced.

For example, we supported the drafting of the 2003 Child Protection Act, which is making it easier to prosecute traffickers and others who would exploit children.

We train police and other justice officials to be sensitive to the needs of children.

As a result, child victims of crime are now interviewed by social workers who understand children, and those children who have been abused can offer testimony by video so that they do not have to face their abusers again. It also means that children in conflict with the law are treated with fairness and, whenever possible, kept out of prison.

We establish child protection committees in provinces where children are particularly vulnerable.

These committees bring together police, social workers, doctors and others so they can work together to

protect children in need, stop and punish those who would take advantage of them, and offer care and support to victims.

We support communities in guarding their children against abuse.

This means we train child volunteers to watch out for and report signs that something is wrong – and to speak out so that abuse, exploitation and neglect become totally unacceptable.

We educate children about their rights and how to protect them.

When children know what is unacceptable and where they can go for help, it is much harder to deny their rights, force them into child labour, lure them into the sex trade or abuse them in any other way.

We offer health services counselling and other support to child refugees and children who have been the victims of violence. This includes child soldiers, children injured by landmines and children abused by the worst forms of child labour.



## KEEP CHILDREN SAFE FROM HIV/AIDS

**We work to prevent new infections among young people.** This means we get information to vulnerable groups, including children who are not in school, migrants and ethnic minorities. We support youth groups who train their peers on how to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS. And we help schools incorporate life skills into their normal teaching curricula.

**We fund care and support services for children who are affected by HIV/AIDS or living with the virus,** such as drop-in centres where children can go to get counselling, access treatment and other services and talk to people who understand.

**For children who are living with HIV/AIDS or who have lost parents, we fund art therapy courses and camps** that help them to think more positively about their lives, and we bring affected and unaffected children together to support each other.

**We help prevent the transmission of HIV from mothers to children by** supporting the government's world-class programme of anti-retroviral medicine and education, which is preventing thousands of new infections each year.

**We work to reduce stigma in communities** by supporting educational projects, street theatre, information centres, local radio stations and groups of people living with HIV who raise awareness in their communities. When communities know the real facts about HIV, they understand that affected children can go to school, play with others, learn and grow just like all children. With understanding comes acceptance and compassion.



## GIVE CHILDREN THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION

**We strive to get all children into school.** This includes the nearly 900,000 primary school-aged children who are never enrolled and the even larger number who are not in secondary school.

This means girls as much as boys. It means children with disabilities and children affected by HIV/AIDS. It means children with no citizenship or birth registration papers. It means children whose schools are destroyed and whose communities are riven by conflict.

**We work to ensure that all children enrol in school at the right age, so no one is left behind.** We undertake cutting-edge research to identify which children are out of school or enrolling late. We take that research and use it to advocate with the government and in communities for action to get all children into school.

**We help make school environments safe, clean and healthy.** This means that all students are protected from harm, and that teachers are trained to look out for signs of abuse or trouble at home. It means schools have clean water,

sanitary toilets and safe areas to play, as well as libraries, sports equipment and other essentials for a child's full physical and intellectual development.

**We work with teachers and children to ensure that lessons are useful and child rights are respected.**

This means children are taught the life skills they need to keep safe and prosper, and that lessons emphasize critical thinking and intellectual development. It means that all children are treated equally and lessons, textbooks and other educational materials are free from discrimination.

**We encourage children, families and whole communities to become involved** in assessing and supporting local schools and in helping to improve teaching and learning.

**We promote early childhood care and development** by providing parents and caregivers with the knowledge and skills they need to help their children reach their full potential.



## KEEP CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND CONCERNS AT THE FOREFRONT OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES

We influence policy makers and lobby those who work with children to put the best interests of the child at the heart of decision making. UNICEF's vast experience and moral authority make us a powerful advocate for change. Combined with reliable data from cutting-edge studies on the situation of women and children in all parts of the country, not just at the national level, we speak with a compelling voice to mobilize action for all children in Thailand.

**We highlight disparities and the needs of marginalized communities.**

By gathering data at the local level, we show how improvements in national-level figures can hide serious deprivation among disadvantaged communities. This is especially true for the children of ethnic minorities, migrant workers and refugees, who are often stateless and therefore overlooked in official statistics.

We assist the government in assessing the impact of legislation and policy on children, and in monitoring progress towards meeting the aims of the Millennium Declaration and its Goals. This includes laws that are specifically directed at addressing children's issues, such as the Child Protection Act of 2003, as well as more general policy initiatives that have a fundamental impact on children, such as ongoing decentralization.

**We undertake and sponsor vital research to show the true situation of children,** including an unprecedented study of 60,000 households to collect data on the well-being of children and women.

**By supporting computer systems for storing and presenting data, we make it easier for government officials to compare the situation in different provinces and districts,** allowing them to formulate policies that target resources where they are most needed and to assess the impact of policy decisions at the local level.



## GIVE CHILDREN A VOICE

**We give children a chance to make the news** by supporting youth television and radio programmes that are broadcast nationwide. These allow children to make their own reports and speak out on issues that concern them. The children themselves decide what they will cover and how; they write the scripts, record the programmes and help take care of the technical side of production.

**We give a voice to the most disadvantaged children by supporting creative photography and writing workshops.** The workshops build confidence and provide useful skills to hundreds of vulnerable children, including migrants, ethnic minorities, orphans, children affected by conflict and the very poor.

**We train journalists on child rights and advocate for higher ethical standards** for the interviewing of children and the coverage of children and children's issues. We try to ensure that the voices of children are heard as part of news stories that involve them, and that journalists understand how to interview children and present their lives with sensitivity, honesty and compassion.

**We also try to ensure that child victims of abuse are protected from further harm.** This means ensuring they are not traumatized by being forced to tell their stories. We make sure their identities are not revealed when doing so may make them subject to further abuse or discrimination. Our annual child-friendly media award for professionals and university journalism students rewards coverage of children's issues that exhibit sensitivity and depth.

**We make it possible for children to take part in decisions that affect their lives.** We have trained youth facilitators to canvas the views of tens of thousands of their peers so that their opinions can be fed into National Plans of Action and other important policy documents on issues ranging from conflict and violence to HIV/AIDS.

**We also support individuals and small groups of children to represent their peers** at conferences and other decision-making forums. We make it possible for them to meet world leaders face to face and to speak up with the same status as other delegates for the concerns of children and young people.



## PROTECT CHILDREN IN EMERGENCIES

**We keep children safe by responding to their immediate needs when disaster strikes.** From installing water and sanitation facilities in temporary shelters and getting children back into school, to repairing school buildings and replacing equipment, distributing vitamin A and providing vaccinations, we work with families, the government and communities to reduce the immediate effects of a disaster.

**We protect orphaned and vulnerable children from exploitation and abuse.** We are there during times of chaos, when families are under great emotional and economic stress, and when traditional systems to watch over children, like schools and day-care centres, have ceased to function. By joining hands with social workers, government and local groups, we watch out for signs of vulnerability and help respond to cases of abuse and exploitation.

**We help reunite children with their parents,** and we support families so that they can stay together. We trace missing children and parents and we support vulnerable families whose lives and livelihoods have been devastated so that they can continue to feed, clothe, educate and care for their children in even the most difficult circumstances.

**We provide counselling services for children to help them deal with loss and fear,** not just in the short term, but for as long as it takes for children to recover a sense of normalcy and go back to their usual routines at home and at school.

**We prepare for future emergencies** so that we and our partners can react immediately to protect children from harm and help them rebuild their lives. Our established presence in the country means we are often among the first on the ground to offer assistance in an emergency.



## MOBILIZE THE PRIVATE SECTOR

We raise money locally to support our programmes in Thailand. Thanks to the generosity of more than 100,000 individual donors, along with businesses and civic organizations, we have been raising money in Thailand for the past 10 years.

We are helped greatly in these endeavours by our Goodwill Ambassadors. Since 1996, two-time former Prime Minister, Anand Panyarachun has worked with us to advocate for children's issues and boost our fundraising efforts. Between 1999 and 2005 actress and TV presenter Kathaleeya McIntosh also contributed to the success of UNICEF's advocacy and fundraising.

We raise funds through the UNICEF giftshop on Phra Atit Road and our sales stand in the Siam Paragon Shopping Center in Bangkok. Among the high-quality cards and gifts on sale are locally made "sa" paper from the Mae Fa Luang project and products designed by leading Thai artists who have donated their copyrights to UNICEF.

We are also supported by donations from industrialized countries.

These come from national governments and from individuals who contribute to fundraising campaigns organized by UNICEF's National Committees in developed countries.

In addition to fundraising, we mobilize the private sector to support child rights through its actions.

These include promoting ethical business practices, offering training and opportunities to vulnerable children, and speaking out on issues affecting the well-being of children.

### WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP

It is only through your generosity that we are able to make such a difference for children in Thailand. Your continued support is vital for us to carry on with our work of protecting children and their rights in Thailand. Together we can change the world for children.

HOW

DO

WE

DO

IT?

## HOW DO WE DO IT?

**UNICEF always works with others to make things better.** Partnerships are essential because the challenges before us are too great to solve alone. When we say “UNICEF does this,” we always mean that we are doing it together with others.

Who do we work with to build a world fit for every child?

**Governments** are our main partners. We collaborate with everyone from Heads of State and ministers to governors, village heads and community councils.

**Non-governmental organizations,** both international and national, youth groups, women’s organizations, religious groups, community and family collectives. We work with all of them.

**Young people** are deeply involved in what UNICEF does. When young people are given a voice in public debate, everyone benefits.

**Leaders** – influential men and women from all walks of life – work with us to make positive changes for children happen in the present and to plan for them in the future.

**Donors and the private sector,** as UNICEF is funded entirely by voluntary contributions. In addition to financial resources, the private sector offers considerable skills and influence that can be used to benefit children.

**Empowering people to manage for themselves is a significant part of what UNICEF does.** Through cooperation and partnership, we share our global knowledge and experiences to help others find local solutions.



# CHILDREN BY THE NUMBERS



## THAILAND AT A GLANCE

- Children make up 30 per cent of the population in Thailand
- 10 per cent of the population live below the national poverty line
- GDP per capita in 2005 is about 110,000 baht but parts of the north, the northeast and far south are particularly impoverished

## CHILD MORTALITY AND MALNUTRITION

- Around 7,000 children below the age of one die each year, while 9,800 die before they reach their fifth birthday
- Around 9 per cent of children are underweight and 7 per cent are overweight
- Only 47 per cent of households use adequately iodized salt, which is the best way of guaranteeing children get enough iodine for full mental and physical development
- Only 5 per cent of children are exclusively breastfed during their first six months of life

## HIV/AIDS

- 4 out of 5 adults have negative attitudes toward people living with HIV/AIDS
- Some 600,000 people in Thailand are living with HIV/AIDS, including some 1.5 per cent of the population aged 15-49
- An estimated 380,000 children have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS

## EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

- Nearly 900,000 primary school-aged children (aged 6-11) are not in school or enroll late
- Only 73 per cent of secondary school-aged children (aged 12-17) are in school
- More girls than boys are in secondary school (83 per cent versus 77 per cent), and the greatest gender imbalance is seen in the South (80 per cent versus 64 per cent)

## MATERNAL HEALTH

- 41 mothers die for every 100,000 children born
- Many maternal deaths are among HIV-positive women and are preventable

## CHILD PROTECTION

- Nearly 1 million children do not have birth registration documents
- More than one-third of children live without both of their parents, which is usually due to marital problems or death
- Nearly 6,000 children were treated at provincial hospitals in 2006 due to abuse, and around 70 per cent of these children were treated for sexual abuse

# UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2015

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental stability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

## TIMELINE

**1948** UNICEF office established in Bangkok

**1950** First projects to address trachoma, parasites and environmental sanitation

**1951** Yaws control programme begins - and yaws is effectively eradicated by the early **1960s**

**1953** Mass tuberculosis (BCG) vaccination campaign becomes the start of a permanent BCG vaccination programme

**1960** Clean drinking water and sanitation programmes start in rural areas, while corn-soy milk distribution begins to reduce protein deficiency

**1961** Programmes aimed at achieving universal coverage of iodized salt to prevent physical and mental retardation begin

**1964** Promotion of primary education begins with teacher training and awareness-raising projects

**1984** First case of HIV/AIDS reported in Thailand

**1992** Thailand ratifies the Convention on the Rights of the Child

**1997** New constitution passed, guaranteeing 12 years of free education and the protection of basic human rights

**2003** World's first multi-country Memorandum of Understanding on trafficking signed between Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand

**2004** Child Protection Act passed, greatly increasing legal protection for children

**2005** UNICEF begins spending over 11 million dollars on tsunami recovery programmes

**2006** UNICEF works with National Statistical Office to complete Thailand's largest-ever survey on the well-being of women and children

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