

CHILD PROTECTION

unicef 
for every child



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Children at a camp for displaced residents after the Central Sulawesi earthquake and tsunami.

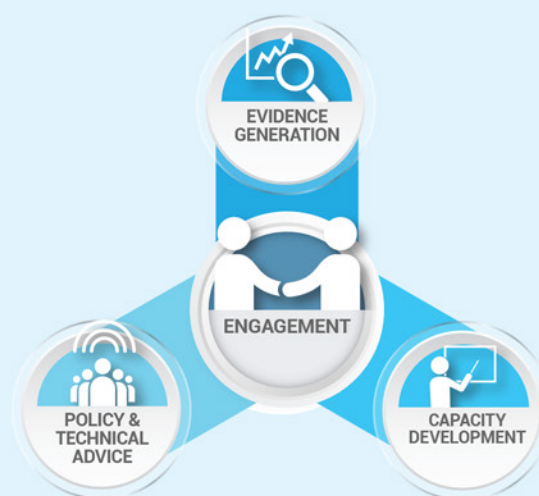
Child protection in Indonesia – Developing strong policy and regulations for every child

About child protection

The Government of Indonesia's child protection agenda has led to significant improvements in children's well-being in recent years. A key factor in strengthening child protection is the development and improvement of policies, which require continuous attention to achieve positive child protection outcomes over the long run. Ensuring birth registration for all children presents an ongoing challenge in Indonesia, as does decreasing the prevalence of violence against children. Recently, the need has arisen to develop policies and programmes to meet the needs of children living without parental care and protect children during disasters. Child protection adds a new dimension to the overall need for disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response.

UNICEF in Indonesia

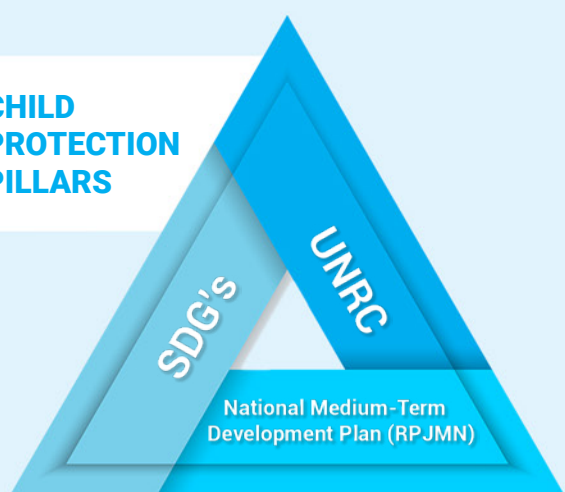
UNICEF works with a wide array of stakeholders to support child protection efforts across Indonesia, with the aim of developing a comprehensive system that promotes and ensures the protection of girls and boys in all contexts. For example, this work includes generating evidence to inform child-related policies and governance, strengthening the capacity of key stakeholders involved in ensuring children's welfare and providing innovative technical support for child-related policy reform and programming across the nation. UNICEF executes these strategies by nurturing partnerships for child rights and acting as a leading voice for all children, everywhere.



**UNICEF Indonesia's
Upstream Approach**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) designates respect for child rights as the underlying principle and international standard for behaviour towards children. The Convention recognizes that children – anyone under the age of 18 – must be allowed to grow, learn, play, develop and flourish with dignity, while being protected from harm. Within this context States are obliged to respect and promote all child rights, and protect children from all forms of discrimination, violence and exploitation. The State must take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures to ensure that all children are protected, and that the best interests of the child is the primary consideration underlying all decisions and actions taken.

CHILD PROTECTION PILLARS



Child Protection within the SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for “leaving no-one behind.” Since children are one of the world’s most vulnerable groups, promoting and ensuring their full human development is integral to achieving the SDGs.

Among the indicators for progress toward the SDGs, 35 are directly related to child rights, including:

- ▲ **Target 4.1:** Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- ▲ **Target 4.A:** Build and upgrade education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender- sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
- ▲ **Target 5.2:** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- ▲ **Target 5.3:** Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage
- ▲ **Target 16.2:** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- ▲ **Target 16.3:** Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all
- ▲ **Target 16.9:** Provide legal identity, including birth registration, for all.



Good health behaviour is integral to a child's development.

Why child rights matter

Disproportionate – often negative – impact of societal change

The transformation of family structures, globalization, climate change, digitalization and large-scale migration all have a strong impact on children – even more so in the context of armed conflict and other emergencies.

Children are individuals

Children are neither possessions of their parents nor the state; they have equal status as members of the human family.

Children start life as totally dependent beings

They rely on adults for the nurture and guidance they need to grow towards independence. If primary adult caregivers are unable to fulfil their role, the State is obliged to develop and strengthen alternative care in the best interests of the child.

Government actions impact children more than any other group

Every area of government policy affects children; therefore to have a positive impact all policy-making must consider the best interests of the child.

If we fail our children – the costs are huge

Children's earliest experiences significantly influence their future development, which in turn will determine their contribution – or cost – to society over the course of their lives.

Healthy development is crucial to society's well-being

The effects of disease, malnutrition and poverty threaten children's future, and therefore the future of the societies in which they live.

Hearing children's views in the political process

While most children don't vote or take part in traditional political processes, their opinions and views must be afforded attention and heard, as today's decisions can affect them now or in the future.



Students at SMK Muhammadiyah enjoy a Life Skills Education Programme lesson, Sorong, Papua Province.



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A young girl gets creative with her drawing homework.

Birth registration

Challenges related to children's birth registration continue to create significant difficulties that prevent Indonesian children from accessing basic services, such as health and education. Today 60 per cent of the nation's new-borns are not registered at birth. Lack of birth registration also creates an information gap that hinders the development of solid, evidence-based policies and plans in the health and education sectors across the nation. While Indonesia's birth registration figures have risen, a number of factors continue to prevent the nation's children from being counted and having a national identity. Distance from registration services is an ongoing challenge for many of the nation's outer islands, while the indirect costs associated with the free registration service remain significant for poorer families. Parents' lack of a marriage certificate can create registration difficulties for their children. Finally, some communities lack awareness of the importance of registering their children.

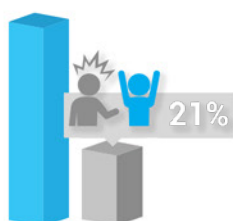


60% of newborns still not registered at birth

Source: SUSENAS, 2014.

Violence and exploitation

Violence and exploitation of children continues to have a significant impact on the health and welfare of Indonesian communities, which can result in long-term negative impacts on children's mental and physical health. Forms of violence and exploitation vary significantly; some, such as child marriage, are underpinned



21% of children report experiencing intimidation at school

by cultural norms or economic motives. Physical, emotional and sexual abuse is widespread; bullying and verbal assaults are frequently experienced by youth across the nation. Such experiences are often amplified as a result of online interactions, as digital-based exploitation of children continues to rise globally. Violence and exploitation not only have a direct negative impact on children's wellbeing, but also constrain overall national growth and development.

Source: UNICEF Pilot Project Evaluation, 2018.

Living outside of parental care

Child protection issues are significantly higher for children who live outside of family care – whether they live with extended family, in institutional care or in other, possibly worse, circumstances. While Indonesia has been working to develop a social welfare system, the country has yet to provide significant support or assistance to extended families caring for relatives' children. Institutionalization is a common outcome for children removed from parental care. This less-than-ideal situation becomes worse if the institution is not formally registered and lacks staff equipped with the knowledge and skills required to assist children. In Indonesia, the social service workforce assigned to support children living outside of parental care remains under-skilled and overworked, while public funding for child welfare services remains well below the amount needed.



Approximately 50% of institutionalised children experience physical violence in institution.

Source: Someone that Matters, Save the Children, 2007.

Child protection in an emergency setting

Indonesia's high risk of natural disaster poses serious challenges for child protection, as children face additional risks during the onset of an emergency. Emergencies often displace children from their homes and separate them from family units, requiring increased reporting and tracing mechanisms during times of upheaval. Emergency contexts also place children at higher risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, highlighting the need for heightened child protection in communities and shelters. Stress and psychosocial issues occur frequently during emergencies, requiring psychosocial support specific to children's individual needs. Birth registration issues also multiply in emergency settings, and re-issuance of birth certificates and other legal



1 in 3 caregivers identified their children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties following the 2018 Central Sulawesi earthquake and tsunami disaster.

Source: Crisis Centre at Psychology Faculty, University of Indonesia & UNICEF, 2019.

Justice for children

Formal justice systems are inherently designed for adults, yet often impact children when they come into conflict with the law. Children are exposed to physical and emotional abuse in detention – violating their rights. Children in conflict with the law can be better protected by diverting them away from the formal criminal justice system and supporting them through other types of assistance and programmes. Indonesia still faces challenges in improving outcomes for children in conflict with the law. Laws and efforts initiated by the central government have yet to be adopted at sub-national levels, impeding their implementation on the ground. Systems also lack comprehensive standard operating procedures, while current community diversion models may be ad hoc and underfunded.



1/3 of children in conflict with the law are detained within the formal criminal justice system.

Source: UNICEF Justice for Children Reform in Indonesia, 2016.

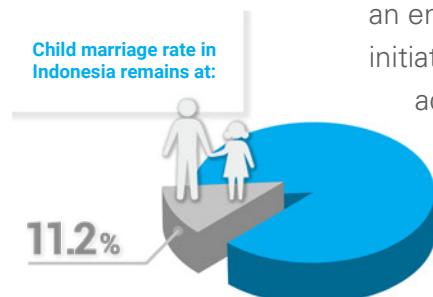


Adolescents from MTS Model Kota Sorong School, take part in the Life Skills Programme.

Child marriage

While Indonesia's Marriage Act has already been updated to protect girls under 19 years of age from forced marriage, numerous gaps permit underage marriage to remain a common occurrence in Indonesia. Many of these marriages take place due to long-standing beliefs and traditions within certain cultures and religions, as well as to economic circumstances affecting poorer communities. UNICEF continues to work toward putting

an end to child marriage in Indonesia by supporting the implementation of initiatives such as the Life Skills Education programme, which seeks to empower adolescents to address challenges they face daily – among which is child marriage. Through this approach the young participants gain new knowledge about important topics and are provided with skills to manage risks and make informed and independent decisions about their personal lives.

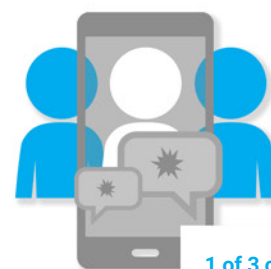


Source: Child Marriage Fact Sheet, UNICEF Indonesia, 2020.

Online protection

Protecting children from the array of dangers they face online, while also ensuring that they can access the opportunities that the online world provides, is a balance that must be sought in the ever-expanding digital world. Sexual abuse and exploitation of children through online platforms continues to increase globally and cyber-bullying poses a serious threat to a child's health and happiness.

Online dangers will always exist, but do not automatically translate into harm. Efforts are required to protect children as they access opportunities for learning and exercise their right to freedom of expression in the online world. All these elements must be considered when creating a safe digital space for Indonesia's children.



1 of 3 children victim of cyberbullying.

Source: Child Protection Online Advocacy Brief, UNICEF, 2019.



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A young boy plays online games on a mobile telephone.

Birth certificates for all

UNICEF Indonesia's *Birth Registration Pilot Programme* was developed to support the Government to strengthen existing birth registration systems across several regions. The pilot addressed barriers and bottlenecks to registration, working with national and local governments to identify sustainable solutions. The programme also focused on collecting and analysing data on birth coverage and utilizing this data for policy-making and advocacy with local and national decision-makers. Overall, locations carrying out the pilot programme showed significant increases (17.5 per cent average across pilot locations) in birth registration rates over other locations, providing a strong argument for scaling-up the effort. Expanding the programme will require consideration of each local context and equal access by all potential beneficiaries.



© UNICEF Indonesia/2019/Rizka Fatimah Ramli

Illustration depicted child marriage by Rizka, winner of UNICEF's and Comics Uniting Nations' End Violence in Schools Superhero Comic Contest.

PKSAI: An integrated social welfare programme

Indonesia's social welfare system includes all of the elements required for a strong child protection programme and thus to support the Ministry of Social Affairs and UNICEF to develop and implement the 'Integrated Child Welfare Service Model' (*Program Kesejahteraan Sosial Anak Integratif – PKSAI*). This programme aims to better protect vulnerable children and families, particularly child victims of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, by addressing complex challenges related to policy implementation, service delivery and decentralization. A key strength of the PKSAI model – already piloted in several regions – is the way that it improves access for children and families to health services, legal support, education and birth registration. This integrated approach addresses an important obstacle that has faced child protection in Indonesia – namely, lack of coordination between different service providers within the child protection system.

Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action

Indonesian children are highly vulnerable to natural disaster risks, creating an urgent need for all humanitarian actors to prioritize the protection of children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect within disaster contexts. The *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action* – as developed by The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action – are the global recommended guidelines for all parties and sectors to work together swiftly and inclusively to protect the rights of children before, during and long after a disaster strikes. These child protection guidelines are being adopted by governments, humanitarian organizations and private sector groups that engage in disaster management. The Standards aim to improve the quality of and accountability for child protection during disasters, establishing common principles and strengthening coordination among humanitarian actors and disseminating best practices from around the world.

KEY ASKS



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Children play in the backyard of their home.

UNICEF advocates for an Indonesia in which all children have legal birth certification, are free from violence and exploitation, are supported by a strong social welfare system with child-specific justice interventions and are afforded special attention in disaster preparedness and risk reduction efforts.

To achieve this, UNICEF calls for action by policymakers to legislate, oversee and finance the strengthening of child protection across Indonesia:



Legislate

- ✓ Ensure registration and birth certificates for all children born in Indonesia – regardless of background, religion or status at birth
- ✓ Develop legislation that is compliant with the UNCRC and eliminate current legislation that discriminates against children – such as discrimination based on the marital status of a child's parents
- ✓ Enforce national standards of care for children in institutions, while establishing and expanding social protection that supports children's reintegration into a family-based care environment
- ✓ Protect children from online and digital threats such as sexual exploitation, strong violent content, social exclusion and bullying – without curbing their ability to learn and benefit from technology.



Oversee

- 🔍 Ensure that birth registration disparities based on location are overcome
- 🔍 Implement legislation to address the factors creating child and family vulnerability that lead to institutionalization and family separation
- 🔍 Enforce existing regulations that protect children from all forms of violence
- 🔍 Implement juvenile justice laws, with a specific focus on enhancing diversion mechanisms.



Finance

- 💰 Within the health sector budget, allocate funds for strong community-based and integrated child protection initiatives
- 💰 Provide funding for the establishment and strengthening of the PKSAI model, which provides comprehensive, accessible and quality services at the district and provincial levels
- 💰 Invest in strengthening the social services workforce to increase professional service provision and ensure the presence of more social workers on the ground
- 💰 In all budgets, prioritize efforts to prevent all forms of violence towards children
- 💰 Allocate sufficient funding for child protection measures in disaster preparedness and risk-reduction programming.



UNICEF staff support education centres after the Central Sulawesi earthquake and tsunami.



© UNICEF Indonesia/2015/Joshua Estey

A mother carrying her 3-year-old daughter walks on a road in the village of Kemalang in Klaten District, Central Java Province.

This discussion of the need for enhanced child protection in Indonesia is reflected in President Widodo's three instructions for overcoming violence towards children in Indonesia:

1. Undertake prevention efforts through campaigns, socialization and public education that is not only engaging but develops increased societal attention to violence against children.
2. Prepare a reporting and complaint system specifically for violence against children, and prioritize a speedy response to reports.
3. Undertake large-scale reform of current case management handling to ensure that cases are handled speedily through a comprehensive, integrated response; potentially through a one-stop service that includes complaint support all the way through to health service provision.

“

I am sure that the phenomenon of non-reporting of violence towards children is only the tip of the iceberg – with only a small number of cases actually reported to authorities.

– **Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia**

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