Fiinxee was married off at 13 in Ethiopia by her family because of the drought, as they needed the dowry for income. This year, Ethiopia has been hit by the worst drought in 40 years. After, being stuck in the marriage for 8 months, she heard from her neighbours that she could get help and get out of the marriage. She went to the local authorities, and they immediately helped her and a few weeks later, her marriage was legally cancelled in court. She is now back with her family and in school.

Fiinxee is part of a UNICEF supported school committee that helps raise awareness about the perils of child marriage and the importance of staying in school. She also refers cases of vulnerable girls who are being forced into child marriage or are already married, to local authorities so they can intervene. UNICEF works closely with the regional governments throughout the country to help provide financial and technical support to help end child marriage.

CORNELIUS’ CORNER

As we wind down 2022, I am filled with voices and images of the field visits I recently concluded across several continents that have left me reinvigorated. In Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, I witnessed countless examples of evidence-based approaches and innovation being brought to scale by colleagues in the field. We should be proud of these approaches as they have the potential and promise to extend the coverage of critical interventions that would ensure the rights of children to protection from abuse, exploitation, violence and harmful practices. We are achieving incredible changes at every level, with children, families and communities and with local and national Governments. This would not be possible without the unwavering commitment of so many colleagues and partners in the field to ensure the protection of children, even in the most difficult circumstances.

This has filled me with a renewed sense of pride and determination and a belief that with the necessary investments and commitments we can tackle even the most persistent child protection challenges and the dire risks children are facing, especially in humanitarian contexts.

I feel genuine satisfaction as well for certain milestones achieved during this period at the global level, which I consider significant for our sector to acknowledge.

On November 18, the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) was endorsed by over 80 countries, led by Ireland. UNICEF’s Executive Director, Catherine Russell, called this a “bright star”. Signatory States now have a roadmap to improve the implementation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and even move beyond (IHL+), including by ensuring their armed forces will restrict, or refrain from the use of, EWIPA. They will have to identify and adopt military measures and other practices that reduce harm to children and their communities. UNICEF is deeply engaged in the EWIPA and we were actively involved in advocacy to support the Declaration.
Another powerful global moment, also on November 18, involved the tributes to the first UN World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Violence. UNICEF’s voice had been among those calling for a long overdue globally recognized moment to let survivors know that the world stands with them and that they have a right to justice and healing. In November, the UN General Assembly responded by establishing this new UN World Day. I spent November 18 with survivors and was awed and humbled by their human strength and courage to overcome such life shattering experiences. Their testimonies also filled me with shame and frustration, knowing that we have the evidence of how such violence against children can be prevented and that, nevertheless, investments and actions to do so around the world, are severely inadequate.

Hopeful trends also emerged from the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registry in Ethiopia in October. This included a new UNICEF statistical profile of Birth Registration for Africa which shows that 20 countries are on track to achieve universal birth registration (SDG 19.2) by 2030. Interoperability between civil registries and health systems is proving to be a game-changing strategy in achieving this goal.

Back in June, UNICEF published a report on “25 years of children and armed conflict: Taking action to protect children in war.” This took me back almost thirty years to when I met the inspiring Dr. Graça Machel as she was working on her seminal report on children affected by armed conflict. I thought of how far we have come and how far we still must go. This quarter century analysis, for the first time, tells the story of the impact of war on children across the world, across violations, and over time. It also examines how evidence on the documented patterns of grave violations is being used to protect children in such contexts and the urgent necessary actions that remain.

Coming back to my recent time in the field, I spent several days in India in October with the Steering Committee for the UNICEF-UNFPA Global Programme to End Child Marriage. That provided a strong reminder that if the SDGs are to be realized by 2030, localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, and community ownership and leadership, are absolutely crucial. This visit, along with time spent in Senegal with the Steering Committee of the UNICEF-UNFPA Global Programme to end FGM, left me ingrained with the optimism and audacity of girls who are standing up and demanding their rights, spreading information to their peers and participating in efforts to advance gender equality. I carry with me, in particular, the bravery of a young girl in Kolda, Senegal who shared her own experience as evidence to contradict a local leader who claimed that FGM no longer existed in her community. One vital task at hand is to ensure that platforms for adolescent participation and decision making are sustained, again building on commitments and investments at local levels.

Thank you for having indulged my optimistic mood as 2022 concludes. I hope that the signs of hope provide us all with much needed fuel as we steadfastly plough ahead together to tackle long-standing and emerging child protection challenges across the globe. And for colleagues and partners who shared their stories with me during recent meetings and field visits, thank you very much for inspiring me.
CHILD PROTECTION HAPPENINGS AND TRENDS

This month, UNICEF launched its Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal for 2023, asking for US$10.3 billion needed to reach more than 110 million children – including 54 million girls and 10 million children with disabilities – with humanitarian assistance across 155 countries and territories in 2023. Today there are more children in need of humanitarian assistance than at any other time since the Second World War. Conflict; climate change; displacement; infectious disease outbreaks; and soaring rates of malnutrition wreck the daily lives of hundreds of millions of children—often concurrently. All of these have widespread impacts on child protection.

We are seeing, for example, how the global food crisis is making women and girls even more vulnerable. As families struggle to cope, women and girls are more likely to be exposed to sexual violence, intimate partner violence, exploitation and forced marriage. The risks of GBV to women and girls who have been displaced can be even more acute. Child marriage often increases in times of drought as families look to earn dowries and also hope their children will be fed by wealthier families. We see this in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, where historic drought is driving mass displacement and triggering a malnutrition crisis. In Somalia, there has been a 20 per cent increase in women and girls seeking GBV services in drought-affected communities during the first half of 2022. In Ethiopia, rates of child marriage have more than doubled within a year.

On the occasion of the 77th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September, UNICEF organized and participate in several high-profile events to advocate for increased attention to several child protection issues. One of these events which focused precisely on food insecurity and women and girls in humanitarian crises was hosted at UNICEF House, sponsored by the Danish and Zambian Governments, with the participation of HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark and several Ministers (Denmark, Nigeria, Norway and the United Kingdom). There was agreement amongst participants that gender-based violence should be an integral consideration of all mitigation and response measures to address the global food insecurity crisis. Another strong point of consensus was that involving more local women’s led organizations in related discussions and decision-making is vital.

At another event in the framework of UNGA, hosted by Canada and Zambia at UNICEF House, Ministers from 5 countries (Canada, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, The United Kingdom and Zambia) agreed to meet on an annual basis during UNGA, under the umbrella of the Child Marriage Monitoring Mechanism to review progress to end child marriage up until 2030. The most recent data was presented at the event. Yet another forum at UNICEF House during UNGA showcased how the UN Legal Identity Agenda, Co-Chaired by UNICEF, is supporting countries to make progress on improving civil registration, vital statistics & identity management from birth to death. Country examples from Cambodia and Cameroon were highlighted for participating donors and Member States.

Also in September, the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) Forum 2022 took place in Mexico. SRVI is the world’s largest network and conference on violence against children and women in lower- and middle-income countries. The UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti partnered with the World Health Organization (WHO) and SVRI to develop a research agenda related to the intersections between violence against children and women. A summary brief outlining key findings was presented at a validation workshop at the SVRI Forum. The new research agenda will contribute to building knowledge in a more systematic way, ensure that research efforts make the best use of limited resources, and serve to monitor progress over time. It will also inform the implementation of the multiagency RESPECT Women and INSPIRE frameworks, support UNICEF’s commitment to respond to the gender dimensions of violence, guide SRVI grant-making and promote coherence in the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In October, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, UNICEF and the United Nations Office on Drugs
and Crime issued a statement expressing concern over, “an increasing failure to uphold international humanitarian and human rights law obligations around the world... often leading to the violation of children's rights.” The UN experts emphasized being, “...particularly concerned about situations in which children above a certain age are treated as adults or as ‘young’ adults. In some instances, this is under the cover of traditional or cultural values or counterterrorism or national security responses, with dramatic implications for the full enjoyment of their rights and protections provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.”

In November, the United Nations General Assembly’s Third Committee adopted a resolution to end child, early and forced marriage (resolution A/C.3/77/L.19/REV.1), led by the Governments of Canada and Zambia and with 125 co-sponsors from around the world. The resolution requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on progress towards ending child, early and forced marriage before the end of the General Assembly 78th session and calls on the General Assembly to consider the issue at its 79th session under the item entitled “Promotion and protection of the rights of children”.

UNICEF Child Protection Update  •  December 2022

**SPOTLIGHT ON PSEA**

**Haiti: Scaling Up Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Measures from the Outset of Humanitarian Response**

The increasing instability of the context in Haiti (cholera, rising gang violence, growing number of people internally displaced, to name a few of the complicating factors) has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, including serious security concerns putting the affected population under severe protection issues.

Women and children are forced to stay in spontaneous shelters or on the streets, facing high risks of violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Civil unrest, violence and kidnapping are causing disruption in service delivery and weakening the regular protection networks. PSEA has been a priority for UNICEF, through a dedicated approach as well as mainstreaming PSEA in other interventions. As the first UN agency to update its corporate emergency procedures, UNICEF made it mandatory to provide PSEA resources to communities from the outset. PSEA has been integrated in UNICEF Programme Documents and clauses of commitment, with related indicators to track and monitor.

To mitigate increased SEA risks, UNICEF has proactively assessed partners involved in the cholera response against standard PSEA requirements and worked with them to scale up their PSEA capacity. A priority focus is on the scale up of safe and accessible SEA reporting channels, alongside awareness raising material including child-friendly messages on SEA which have been developed and distributed in French and Creole.

A dedicated PSEA team has conducted various community engagement activities, affirming the right to receive assistance without being asked for sexual favours in exchange, and sharing information on available reporting channels and survivor assistance through existing referral pathways. Hundreds of U-Reporters have been trained on PSEA and are facilitating the two-way communication between affected communities and UNICEF. Assistance to potential survivors of SEA is made possible through close coordination with existing Gender Based Violence and Child Protection services. UNICEF has supported school fees, lunch boxes and other services for children born out of SEA, as well as income generating activities for their mothers.
THE LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC: STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE

In 2021, to address the heightened child protection risks brought by COVID-19, UNICEF Laos provided support to the Lao Women’s Union (LWU) and Lao People’s Revolutionary Youth Union (LYU) to make counselling services available to vulnerable women and children through helplines, the only free hotlines in the country. A stigma surrounding mental illnesses prevails in the country, which resulted in a relatively low service uptake of these mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS) initially. There were also a limited number of trained professional mental health experts to staff the helplines.

To tackle this situation, UNICEF supported activities to raise public awareness regarding mental health and trained hundreds of staff from both organizations. UNICEF and LYU also developed a Manual on Youth and Adolescents Counselling for helpline volunteers. UNICEF continues supporting the scaling-up of helpline services into other regions to reach more children and young people.

With the support of KOICA, UNICEF has also supported the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW) with the development of a national Psychological First Aid and MHPSS training manual and subsequent rollout trainings at the national and provincial levels, with a plan to reach all provinces. The training manual has been further adopted and modified for use by the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Counselling Department for teachers’ training of the National University of Laos.

Beyond MHPSS, UNICEF has further helped strengthen the professionalization of the social service workforce through the review of the National University of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic’s BA in Social Work. A comprehensive standard package has also been developed to train and guide child protection networks and para-social workers at subnational levels.
SOUTH SUDAN: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE RISK MITIGATION AND NUTRITION

As part of a multi-year collaboration to make nutrition programming as safe and accessible as possible for women and girls, a study on the effectiveness of gender-based violence (GBV) risk mitigation – the first of its kind globally – is currently underway in South Sudan. The study seeks to capture if and how GBV risk mitigation interventions contribute to improved safety, utilization, and access to nutrition services for women and adolescent girls as well as nutrition programming performance indicators.

The core partners for this initiative include South Sudan Ministry of Health; South Sudan Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare; UNICEF; Action Against Hunger; The Organisation for Children Harmony (TOCH); African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD); and Kenyatta University.

South Sudan was selected as the location for this study because of the innovative GBV risk mitigation programming that has been implemented in the country for nearly a decade. Efforts to integrate GBV within the Nutrition sector – including the interagency nutrition safety audits led by UNICEF, Action Against Hunger and the Nutrition Cluster in 2018-2019 – have been cited as best practices globally, replicated in other countries, and used to inform sectoral guidance and capacity building materials. With women and girls as their primary users and high levels of trust from the communities they serve, nutrition programmes present a natural platform for integrating GBV programming elements. As such, the programmatic package for this study includes – among other elements – regular consultations with women and girls, safety audits, basic GBV training for all frontline nutrition workers, and coordinated community outreach involving GBV and nutrition service providers.

Baseline data collection was completed in September 2022 and in November 2022 a package of GBV risk mitigation interventions began to be implemented in six sites. End-line data collection is planned for the third quarter of 2023. The findings of this study aim to further strengthen both nutrition and GBV programming in South Sudan – including through sharing of resources and targeted capacity building with other members of the South Sudan Nutrition Cluster and GBV sub-cluster – and will contribute to important global learning to support the nutrition sector, the GBV sector, and the humanitarian field more broadly. The project partners also plan to carefully document the process and learning from this cutting-edge work in South Sudan to replicate similar GBV/nutrition integrated programming in other humanitarian contexts around the world.
CROATIA: GUARANTEE FOR EVERY CHILD REACHES MOST VULNERABLE WITH CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

With the main goal of reducing child poverty and social exclusion for children throughout the European Union, the European Commission, in partnership with UNICEF, is implementing “Phase III: Testing the Guarantee for Every Child” in Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Germany, Italy, Lithuania and Spain. In Croatia, this has entailed developing a model of integrated, multidisciplinary, adequately funded family and community services in Međimurje County, a region with limited access to child protection and family support services. This approach includes three components: strengthening access to child protection and family support services, preschool education and early childhood intervention services.

Tatjana Katkić Stanić, Director-General of the Institute for Social Work at the Ministry of Labour, Pensions System, Family and Social Policy in Croatia and National Coordinator for EU Child Guarantee in Croatia, shares, “To improve living conditions and ensure better starting positions for every child at risk of poverty and social exclusion, quality cross-sectoral cooperation between health, social welfare, education, police, justice, local community and non-profit sectors is necessary. Their coordinated action, centred around the child and their family, is essential not only for child development, but also to ensure other achievements and life outcomes and, ultimately, the success of the whole society.”

A salient feature of the programme in Croatia has been establishing community resource centres to provide integrated and adapted community and family-based services in Roma settlements or near them. In terms of Child Protection this has involved strengthening skills of professionals working with these communities—including Roma language skills; intersectoral cooperation; and case management. A concrete example of adapted services for Roma communities is a parenting support initiative developed jointly by UNICEF, the Growing Up Together-Centre for Family Support, the academic community, field-based practitioners and cultural mediators. This is called ‘Growing Up Together Plus’ and it has been piloted and evaluated in 7 Roma settlements. The evaluation revealed that participants showed positive changes in the relationship with their children, with their partners and in their perception of their parental role. The National Action Plan for the EU Child Guarantee has now included the initiative for further implementation across the country.
In 2018, Peru adopted the national policy for the management of school coexistence, a normative framework to prevent and respond to school violence systemically. Since then, UNICEF Peru has been working closely with the Ministry of Education (MOE), providing technical assistance and facilitating coordination with other public sector entities, NGOs, and academic institutions.

One of the key pillars of this effort has been designing a comprehensive school violence prevention model for secondary schools that considers Peru’s unique cultural context and diversity. The model consists of 4 main components namely: socio-emotional skills, integral and comprehensive sex education, school management, and prevention of violence in the community. In partnership with the MOE teams nationwide, this prevention model is expected to eventually reach 2,567 schools with high prevalence of violence, serving over 1.7 million students.

UNICEF has also contributed to the establishment and improvement of the school violence reporting system called “SISEVE,” operating via a website, a hotline, and a mobile app, and the training of schools to properly use the system. UNICEF Peru also contributed to designing the secondary student-led communicational campaign: “Brigada SISEVE” which has reached approximately 1.1 million students nationwide resulting in an increase in the number of cases of violence reported through the system.

In addition, UNICEF has supported the development of a toolkit and training course for teachers on positive discipline. The course has reached close to 2,000 educators in 2022.
LIBYA: BAITY CENTRES PROVIDE CHILD PROTECTION FOR MOST VULNERABLE

The far-reaching impact of the ongoing crisis in Libya has increased a myriad of risks to children whilst access to and quality of basic services suffer. UNICEF Libya has established Baity Centres to provide particularly vulnerable children—migrants, refugees, displaced, and from hosting communities—with a variety of child protection and other services, ensuring a continuum of care.

Community outreach activities are conducted through mobile teams to provide psychosocial support and identification of vulnerable children to be referred to specialized child protection services, including in Baity Centres. Structured mental health and psychosocial support, including recreational activities are provided to all children accessing the Centre. Such activities also provide workers in the Centre an opportunity to detect children who are at risk or who are victims/survivors of violence, abuse, and exploitation to ensure they receive specialized child protection services.

Children who require further services, including healthcare, legal aid, etc., are also referred to the relevant service providers. The active involvement of communities, including parents, is essential to ensure that the Centres’ programmes and services address priority needs for the communities. Parents are also provided with structured psychosocial support activities including parenting sessions on non-violent discipline strategies.

Currently, there are 8 Baity Centres across Libya, reaching more than 40,000 children with child protection services. UNICEF hopes to co-create, with the Ministries of Social Affairs and Education, a sustainability vision through progressive government accountability for the Baity Centres. As a basis for the development of a sustainability strategy, UNICEF is developing a clear service model through documenting the essential service components of the Centres as well as operational costs.
SENEGAL: ACCESSIBLE SOFTWARE IS HELPING IMPROVE CHILD PROTECTION CASE MANAGEMENT

In Senegal, according to national statistics (DHS, 2019), 18.2% of girls between 15 and 19 have experienced physical violence, and 2.9% sexual violence. The thousands of children who are forced to beg in the street are another important group in need of protection. However, there are significant challenges in providing victims with care services. Even though dynamic networks of child protection actors exist at local level, their lack of effective coordination limits the ability of services to reach targeted populations.

Rapid Protection is a RapidPro-based application that works through SMS flows with the aim of connecting communities with the services responsible for care and support for child victims of violence. A network of reporters composed of community actors (neighbourhood delegates, female community health volunteers known as Badienou Gox, neighbourhood security officers, among others) who are trained and registered in the platform, are responsible for detecting and reporting cases they identify in their community of children in need of protection. Reporting is carried out easily and free of charge by SMS, and the information is immediately transmitted to the local agency responsible for care and support to ensure medical, psychosocial and/or legal support for child victims.

Rapid Protection is integrated into the local child protection mechanisms already in place, through equipping key child protection community players with a tool that brings the victims closer to the services in an agile way. Besides reporting, Rapid Protection also enables the collection and consolidation of data on child protection cases in real time. This contributes to a better understanding and analysis of the child protection situation. Rapid Protection is being used in 3 districts. The initiative has also resulted in strengthened coordination mechanisms, including informal mechanisms used at local level to coordinate between sectors (education, health, justice). At the same time, UNICEF has also focused on strengthening and improving the quality of services to be able to respond effectively to the increased demand.
In 2022, Sri Lanka was hit by its worst economic crisis since independence. Children and young people, whose lives had already been turned upside down by COVID-19, once again had to face an extremely challenging situation. Parents had lost jobs, income and, for some, a sense hope for the future. Families on the edge were pushed further into despair as they struggled with power cuts, fuel queues, rising prices of basic commodities and again the pervasive uncertainty and fear. This led to protests on the streets. Children were inevitably caught up, either when attending with family members, or as bystanders.

The economic crisis brought child welfare and justice services to their knees. The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) Helpline struggled to function 24/7 due to power cuts and the limited ability of staff to come to the office. Probation Officers and Child Rights Promotion Officers, whose role is to work with vulnerable children and their families and support them through the crisis, had to work from home. There was very limited fuel for their motorbikes to travel to villages, make home visits and limited ability to rapidly respond to victims of abuse.

At the same time, there were increased reports in the media and from NGOs of serious cases of violence and abuse against children and women. There were also reports from front-line child welfare and protection services of increasing requests from parents to place their children in institutions. Data from 4 Provinces shows that over 500 children were placed in children’s homes in the period from March – August 2022.

To respond to the crisis, UNICEF provided leadership for the coordination of the Protection sector and, in partnership with UNFPA, UNDP and key NGO partners, an appeal was launched that raised over 1 million USD for child protection. These funds were rapidly disbursed through provincial government services and NGOs. To date, over 1,600 children and adolescents have received case management support, mainly to prevent institutionalization, or support reunification. In addition, 6,768 adolescents have received Mental Health and Psychosocial Support.

As much as possible, the response has been used to strengthen the capacity of existing child welfare and justice services to identify the most vulnerable families and work with them to prevent protection concerns from becoming more acute. However, there is a need for a longer-term vision to strengthen the overall child welfare and justice system in Sri Lanka.

As negotiations are underway with the International Monetary Fund to support financial restructuring, UNICEF is also supporting the analysis of the budgets available for child welfare and child justice services and is advocating that the budgets are protected and used more efficiently to support families and vulnerable children.
OPPORTUNITIES TO INVEST IN CHILD PROTECTION

Every child has the right to live free from violence, exploitation and abuse. UNICEF works in more than 150 countries to protect children. We partner with governments, businesses, civil society organizations and communities, harnessing our 75 years of experience and expert staff to lead and pioneer to prevent all forms of violence against children. We also support survivors, including with mental health and psychosocial services. Our efforts strengthen child protection systems to ensure children can access vital social services.

Private and public sector partnerships are crucial to making this work possible. This paper lays out how supporting UNICEF is a highly effective and efficient way to invest in keeping children safe and protected, creating benefits that ripple out and scale up across countries, having an impact today and for generations to come.

SPOTLIGHT ON EVIDENCE, LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE

25 YEARS OF CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT: TAKING ACTION TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN WAR

The report presents key steps that the international community has taken to protect children in situations of armed conflict, with a specific focus on the Security Council-mandated Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) to document grave violations against children and to foster accountability by identifying perpetrators.

Based on 16 years of data from the Secretary-General’s Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, this report illustrates the impact that armed conflicts have had on children, by presenting trends of grave violations across the world and over time. The report examines how information on the documented patterns of grave violations is being used to respond to children’s needs and how engagement with parties to conflict – State and non-State actors alike – enables ending and preventing grave violations.

THE PARIS PRINCIPLES OPERATIONAL HANDBOOK

The Handbook was prepared by the Paris Principles Steering Group, which is co-chaired by UNICEF and Save the Children. It is geared to child protection specialists, government officials, and others working to prevent the recruitment and use of children by armed forces or armed groups; to separate children from armed forces and armed groups; or support children after their release and during reintegration with families and communities.
FRAMING THE FUTURE

Online child sexual exploitation and abuse continue to grow and diversify. *Framing the Future* sets out how the WeProtect Model National Response Framework is supporting national efforts to tackle this scourge. The review captures an extensive body of experience across 42 countries in all regions. By documenting good practices and lessons learned, including from UNICEF country offices, the report illustrates how the Model National Response has become a key reference point to support the building of coordinated, comprehensive and multistakeholder national responses.

PROPOSED GUIDANCE FOR COSTING THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE AND ON DEVELOPING MINIMUM SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE RATIOS

These guides are intended to inform policy makers and workforce managers in ministries of social welfare, finance and planning, and, where applicable, provincial or district authorities and other relevant national bodies responsible for the recruitment, deployment, funding or regulation of the social service workforce. The guides can also be used by a national level leadership group tasked with defining an adequate level of resourcing for social services and, on this basis, a minimum ratio of workforce to population, alongside other steps to strengthen the social service workforce.

BEST INTEREST OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

IOM and UNICEF jointly launched a new set of tools to assist practitioners to follow a Best Interests Procedure for migrant children and to facilitate reintegration support for children and their families. This release, developed in the context of the IOM-UNICEF Strategic Collaboration Framework (2022-2023), shows the organizations’ commitment to speak with one voice and to strengthen stakeholders’ capacities on the protection of migrant children. The tools are a complement to the IOM Reintegration Handbook’s module “A Child Rights Approach to the Sustainable Reintegration of Migrant Children and Families”, also co-developed by IOM and UNICEF.

BUILDING MOVEMENTS, BUILDING POWER

This technical note aims to develop a common understanding of the key concepts and approaches related to social movements and provides practical guidance on designing and implementing effective interventions that enhance adolescent girls’ agency, including collective action for social change, and build coalitions and movements to eliminate FGM.
From 29 October to 5 November 2022, the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage Steering Committee visited Odisha and New Delhi, India.

The visit was an opportunity to meet with the programme team in-country, stakeholders from regional and headquarters offices, partners, girls and community members, to get a better understanding of programme strategies, challenges and opportunities going forward. The UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme, currently in its second phase (2020-2023), has reached over two million girls through life skills and education interventions, and galvanised 20 million community members to take action against child marriages and promote adolescent empowerment in 175 districts across 15 states in India. The programme has supported close to 85,000 adolescent girls in India at risk of child marriage to enrol or remain in school.

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This brief summarizes the findings of the rapid evidence assessment that examined the linkages between exposure to gender-based violence (GBV) and nutrition outcomes for children in fragile settings. The assessment was commissioned as part of UNICEF’s broader commitment to ensure that all programmatic interventions – including, but not limited to, those in the nutrition sector – are as safe and accessible as possible for women and girls.

MEDIA COVERAGE FROM THE VISIT:

MESSAGE OF UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CATHERINE RUSSELL, ON WORLD DAY FOR THE PREVENTION OF AND HEALING FROM CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND VIOLENCE.

At the Dublin conference on EWIPA in November, UNICEF organized a photography exhibit on the impacts of explosive weapons on children in populated areas.
On the occasion of the launch of UNICEF’s report, “25 years of CAAC: Taking Action to Protect Children in War”, Dr. Graça Machel reflects on the progress made by the international community to better understand how wars impact children.

UNICEF curated and chaired a session titled “Child protection in cyberspace – keeping children’s best interests paramount” at the Global Cybersecurity Forum, hosted by the National Cybersecurity Authority (NCA) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 9-10 November 2022. UNICEF’s session brought children’s views and rights to the forefront to secure commitment and catalyse innovation amongst the cybersecurity community to keep children safe online.

At the Forum, UNICEF signed an MOU with the NCA of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to cooperate further on global efforts to improve children’s protection in the digital environment. Click the links to see media interviews with Sanjay Wijesekera (UNICEF Programme Director) (here) and Afrooz Kaviani Johnson (UNICEF Child Protection Specialist) (here)

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM UNICEF GLOBAL CHILD PROTECTION SOCIAL MEDIA

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