Overview of UNICEF-supported World Day of Prayer and Action for Children 2010 activities

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

- In Algeria, sermons in the country’s 15,000 mosques focused on children’s rights and the importance of breastfeeding.
- In Iran, the Ministry of Health is raising awareness among religious leaders about exclusive breastfeeding, with an advocacy campaign planned for 2011.
- In Sudan, 500 religious leaders will come together for discussions on the role religious communities can play around peace and reconciliation in Darfur.

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

- In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, four of the country’s major religious groups, whose networks reach nearly 30 million people, led week-long campaigns promoting key family health practices like breastfeeding and immunization.
- In Sierra Leone, the Inter-Religious Council organized weekly child and maternal health prayer services and community radio programmes by religious leaders.
- In Nigeria, Muslim and Christian religious leaders mobilized parents to take their children to free health services supported by the Ministry of Health.
- In Mauritania, the government, religious leaders and National Forum for Child Rights led campaigns to encourage breastfeeding and the abandonment of corporal punishment. Friday prayers in every mosque in the country were dedicated to themes of child rights and health.
- In Liberia, religious leaders broadcast messages promoting child rights and took part in multi-religious dialogues and prayer services.
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

- In Kenya, religious leaders participated in child health action weeks to promote key child survival practices, with a focus on exclusive breastfeeding.
- In Swaziland, representatives from the country’s religious groups, government and UN agencies planned actions to eliminate violence against children.
- In Zimbabwe, observances attended by religious leaders, government and UN agencies as well as regular Friday prayer and church services focused on the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding.
- In Tanzania, thousands of children joined religious leaders to promote child protection and survival.

SOUTH ASIA

- In Afghanistan, the Ministry of Religious Affairs organized Friday Prayers on children’s rights in Mosques in Kabul and its surroundings.
- In Bangladesh, Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Buddhist leaders will be working with the government on implementing a nationwide Infant and Young Child Feeding Campaign.
- In Nepal, multi-religious coordinated activities, including regular weekly religious services, focused on maternal and child health.

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

- In Indonesia, representatives from Islamic, Christian, Buddhist and Hindu traditions came together in Jakarta to plan a strategy for promoting breastfeeding among their followers.
- In the Philippines, the Episcopal Commission on Inter-Religious Dialogue of the Catholic Bishop’s Conference and Religions for Peace Philippines committed to take concrete actions to promote exclusive breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding.
- In Timor-Leste, UNICEF worked with the church-based network Pastoral das Criancas (Pastoral for Children) in community outreach activities focused on exclusive breastfeeding.

AMERICAS

- In New York, a candlelight vigil was held in Times Square to honor and remember child victims of abuse and exploitation worldwide.
- In Brazil, religious communities were involved in the launch of a nationwide campaign against racism.