CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES IN THE MEDIA
Here follows from UNICEF’s media section a compilation of clips from major media outlets covering international child protection issues over the previous month. These stories do not necessarily represent UNICEF’s views on the topic; rather they present a variety of perspectives (including those that are controversial, sensitive and highly debated) on current issues in child protection from across the globe.

Trust Law: 10 million Child Brides Annually, According to Report
A report entitled ‘Breaking Vows’, undertaken by development charity Plan UK, has revealed that every year 10 million girls become child brides, with Africa and South Asia showing the highest rates. Besides raising ethical issues of the child being married against their will, under-18 marriage runs contrary to UN conventions and resultant problems can include early pregnancies.

UPI: UN Spokesperson Condemns the Taliban’s Use of Child Suicide Bomber
AFGHANISTAN—Soon after it emerged that the Taliban had tricked an 8-year-old Afghan girl into becoming a suicide bomber for them, UN Under-Secretary-General Radhika Coomaraswamy, publically condemned the act as appalling and “almost unimaginable”. This is not the first time a child bomber has been used by the Taliban, in May a 12-year-old boy detonated a vest packed with explosives in the Barmal district of the eastern province of Paktika.
http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2011/06/28/UN-8-year-old-bomber-unimaginable/UPI-83311309235521/?spt=hs&or=tn

The Telegraph: Indians Pay Surgeons to Turn Girls into Boys
INDIA—The issue of India’s uneven gender balance among children, with reports in Delhi showing 886 girls born to every 1,000 boys, was further explored with suggestions that some parents pay to have their daughters surgically transformed into boys. A leading Indian researcher has described the act as symptomatic of India’s growing “social madness” and India’s National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights has ordered a government investigation. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/8601488/Indians-pay-surgeons-to-turn-girls-into-boys.html

NYT: School Attendance Rises in Afghanistan
AFGHANISTAN—Alongside confirmations from Unicef that Taliban attacks on schools have decreased this year, Afghan education officials have claimed larger attendances at school. Afghanistan’s Minister of Education, Ghulam Farooq Wardak, has suggested that lower risks mean “communities are in a very strong position to argue with those who are behind the closing of the schools”.

CNN: Demi Moore teams up with CNN for documentary on Nepalese sex slaves
Actress Demi Moore appeared in a documentary run by the CNN Freedom Project which focused on the efforts of charity Maiti Nepal to prevent the human trafficking and sexual slavery of Nepalese girls. Run by CNN Hero winner Anuradha Koirala, the charity is stationed at ten of the 26 border crossings between India and Nepal and estimates to have saved more than 12,000 women in its 20-year history.

AllAfrica.com: Murekezi Appeal for Child Protection
HUYE—Rwandan Minister of Public Service and Labor Anastase Murekezi marked the International Day of the African Child by calling for a joint effort between parents and government to protect all children. He suggested that families should be assisted by welfare schemes from the government and also proactively embrace family planning themselves.
http://allafrica.com/stories/201106170260.html

The Guardian: UN Reports Should Continue to Pay Attention to Service Providers, says charity CEO
Using the example of the UNFPA’s recent report on the state of the World’s Midwifery, CEO of charity ‘Women and Children First’ Ross Davies argues that reports that pay attention to service providers are progressive because they draw governments and NGOs alike to this previously overlooked sector.

First Post: Child Trafficking still a Problem in India, Despite Progress
INDIA—In the aftermath of the 2011 ‘Trafficking in Persons’ report examining human trafficking activity across 184 countries, India has attracted media attention. Ranked in the report as a Tier 2 country, a large presence of
female sex trafficking has been observed and alleged corruption in the legal system is apparently hampering the punishment of accused traffickers.


**Wall Street Journal: Children Propagated in Syrian conflict**

Children suffering in the midst of violent protests against the Syrian government have found themselves at the heart of a propaganda campaign launched by both sides to defame each other for their inhuman treatment of children. The violent treatment of Syrian children was brought to widespread attention after a video of 13-year-old Hamza Ali al-Khateeb’s mutilated body was posted on Youtube in early June. Amnesty International suggested this was not an exception, estimating that at least 32 children, aged 12 to 17, are at risk from torture.


**SOS children: 3,000 Children Still Housed in Adult DRC Jails**

DRC—Despite the Law on Child Protection passed in 2009 by the Democratic Republic of Congo, which dictated that 18 was the minimum age to serve in jail, 3,000 children are still in adult jails. Some government officials have attributed a lack of cash to its inability to enforce the new law, but this stance has attracted criticism from UNICEF representative, Aliou Maiga, who argues that you do not require money to change attitudes towards the unlawful imprisonment of children.


**AP: Vatican Pledges to Submit UN Report on its Treatment of Children**

The VATICAN—14 years after being asked by the UN to provide a report on its treatment of children the Vatican is preparing to submit the report this fall. The report will explain the Holy See’s role in the cover-up of child abuse committed by the Catholic clergy and there is speculation on whether the Vatican will accept responsibility.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hWrAkqhk0v41K4mbE-hEs9kpZENA?docId=241b3e2c699e403f9b7c61e4b45d32d5

**BBC: Over 2,000 British Children Victims of Sex Grooming**

UK—A six-month study on the sexual grooming in the UK found that, since 2008, there had been 2,083 child victims of sexual abuse and evidence of the involvement of 230 gangs. Peter Davis, head of The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (Ceop) was “shocked” at the lack of action undertaken in parts of the UK and called for child protection agencies to do more to protect victims.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-13957129

**The Nation: UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Visits Pakistani Child Protection Centre**

PAKISTAN—German television personality and UNICEF goodwill ambassador Sabine Christiansen visited a UNICEF supported child protection centre in Pind Khokhar. Pakistan. Aimed at providing children with essential services such as education, the centre will work alongside four similar establishments to protect 4,500 children from violence and exploitation.


**Jakarta Globe: Gumelar Supports Creation of ‘Child-Friendly’ Cities in Jakarta**

JAKARTA—Jakarta’s Minister for Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection Linda Gumelar has pledged to transform at least 100 of the city’s districts and cities into ‘child-friendly’ areas by 2014. According to Gumelar, ‘child-friendly’ constitutes promoting a healthy lifestyle, providing quality education and protecting children from forms of exploitation. The plan is being promoted in accordance with suggestions on a ‘child-friendly’ city that were made by Unicef and the UN Human Settlements Program in 2002.


**The Guardian: Ivorian Children Accommodated by Refugee Camp in Liberia**

LIBERIA—Situated in Liberia, Bahn refugee camp is accommodating 2,000 children fleeing from the violence in the Ivory Coast. NGO Save the Children has set up a primary school and, for the older children, a ‘Child Friendly Space’ to allow them to develop skills and community spirit.


**NYT: Cutting US Child Poverty in Half**

The USA might take a leaf out of Britain’s book with measures to combat child poverty, according to an American economics professor. Policies championed by British governments, such as raising the minimum wage and increasing public benefits for parents, might help to reverse the trend of child poverty in America that has been rising since 2000.