Keeping children safe

Though the South African government is taking great care to keep vulnerable children safe during the 2010 FIFA World CupTM, there is little experience in organising major international sporting events in settings where economic inequality and the numbers of poor and vulnerable children are so high.

Concerns have been raised in public forums and the media about the possible escalation in exploitation and trafficking of children who may be drawn to the football games and related festivities. A boom in sex tourism is also predicted, which may lead to an increase in the trafficking of vulnerable women and children for commercial sexual exploitation.

Migration from impoverished neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and elsewhere puts children at risk of trafficking, particularly when their immigration status is uncertain. Within South Africa, there are reports that children from poor rural areas are trafficked to urban centres.

A local NGO carried out a rapid assessment* on the possible risks children could face during the 2010 FIFA World CupTM.

- **Poverty** – Poor families may exploit their children for economic gain.
- **Child labour** – Children could be exploited for cheap labour, petty crime and begging.
- **Sexual services** – Children are at risk of being trafficked for the tourist sex trade.
- **Organised crime** – Gangs and organised crime syndicates may flourish during the event and target children for prostitution and drug dealing.
- **Alcohol** – Alcohol consumption in public spaces increases children’s vulnerability to abuse.
- **School closure** – Schools will be closed during the 2010 FIFA World CupTM. This will lead to a sharp increase in the number of unattended children.
- **Relaxing of border control** – South Africa is planning to introduce visa-free travel across southern Africa in time for the 2010 FIFA World CupTM. This could facilitate cross-border human trafficking.

*‘Rapid assessment of the impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup on the abuse, exploitation and trafficking of children’, Cape Town, South Africa, Molo Songololo, 2008
The South African government, in partnership with other role players, is committed to making the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ a safe and successful experience for citizens and visitors alike, and to leave a lasting social, cultural and economic legacy for the country. Support to vulnerable children and women who may need protection is a priority in the preparations for the event, and an opportunity to strengthen national child protection systems that will benefit children for years to come.

The government’s Justice, Crime Prevention and Safety cluster has coordinated national and provincial task teams on human trafficking. These teams, which comprise 14 permanent members, are preparing concrete action plans. With the collaboration of international partners, police and border officials have been trained on issues relating to trafficking in persons.

The national Department of Social Development is preparing a specific Child Protection Action Plan. This will include the establishment of a national government-NGO working group and task teams in host cities charged with designing and implementing local child protection plans.

UNICEF, in collaboration with its civil society and private sector partners, is supporting the government to develop and implement measures to prevent and reduce the possible abuse, exploitation and trafficking that some children might experience during the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, and to strengthen child protection system as an enduring legacy of the global event.

Four key programmatic areas will be the focus for support during and after the 2010 FIFA World Cup™:

1. Child Protection
2. Sport for Development
3. Promoting the Millennium Development Goals
4. Media and Internet

1. CHILD PROTECTION

Child protection services

The police, social workers, auxiliary social workers and child and youth care workers are on the front line of the response to children in need of care and protection. During the soccer matches, emergency teams will be deployed on a 24-hour basis at hot spots in each of the host cities. In the long term, however, the capacity of these professionals needs to be strengthened to respond to growing numbers of children at risk of abuse, exploitation and trafficking in South Africa.

The Department of Social Development, with UNICEF support, will train approximately 1,000 social and childcare workers from government and NGO sectors in all nine provinces. The training focused on protocols and procedures for responding to children in need of care and protection, and referral mechanisms to designated places of safety, legal and health assistance, and psychosocial care.
UNICEF is engaging all its partners in a campaign exclusively focused on human trafficking. The Red Card campaign, first launched by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 2002, aims to expand awareness of child abuse and exploitation and urge members of the public to protect children. The symbol of the campaign, a ‘red card’ represents red cards given to soccer players who severely violate the rules of the game, and are disqualified from further participation. By using this symbol, the campaign sends out a message that child abuse and exploitation have no place in South Africa and during the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

UNICEF South Africa is facilitating the creative development of campaign material such as leaflets and posters, featuring the red card and accompanied by specific, strong messages aimed at children and communities, adults/parents, and tourists, travellers and visiting football fans. More than 500,000 pieces of information materials aimed at making one million impressions will be distributed via existing distribution channels. The National Prosecuting Authority, a UNICEF partner, will be responsible for prosecuting cases of human and child trafficking.

UNICEF’s corporate partner, TOTAL South Africa, along with hospitality industry organisations, will distribute credit-card sized ‘little red cards‘ bearing the legend “Give the red card to child exploitation: Be aware and keep children safe”, via service stations, hotels and car rental companies. The cards will provide contact details for reporting cases of child exploitation to the South African Police, and referring children to nationally known children’s protection service partners such as Childline and Child Welfare South Africa. The little red card will also be distributed to children and adults by loveLife, Fair Trade and Tourism, and during UNICEF’s community sports festivals that will take place in all nine provinces from 10 June to 11 July.

Adoption of The International Code against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism

With the influx of visitors and football fans, there will most likely be an increased demand for sexual services. UNICEF and ILO are supporting Fair Trade and Tourism South Africa (FTTSA), an independent non-profit organisation that promotes equitable and sustainable tourism development in the country, to launch The International Code against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism on 8 June. This will help cement South Africa’s position as a leading responsible tourism destination concerned with the protection of children from sex tourism.

Code signatories will be supported to raise awareness about commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourism immediately prior and during the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, for example by placing awareness material in hotel rooms and public spaces and inserting information into in-house publications. UNICEF has provided technical support to the development of the Code and is helping to produce the brochures that FTTSA will distribute to code signatories for further dissemination.

FTTSA has also partnered with UNICEF and ILO to support implementation the Red Card campaign through the hotel, travel and tourism industry.

Child-friendly Spaces at 4 FIFA Fan Fests

The official FIFA Fan Fests™ are expected to attract upwards of 12,000 people per day to watch the games on massive TV screens. These public viewing areas will most likely become places of festivity and excitement for families, as many ordinary folk in South Africa cannot afford tickets to the matches. Situations may arise in the FIFA Fan Fests and other unofficial public viewing spots that could make children vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation.

UNICEF South Africa, in collaboration with South African government task teams, the Host Cities, government and private sector partners, will establish child-friendly spaces in four FIFA

Child-friendly spaces aim to provide:

• A safe and supervised environment where children can watch matches and enjoy child appropriate activities away from adults.
• Emergency care and tracing services for children who are unattended and become separated from their parents in and around the FIFA Fan Fests.
• A base for specialised childcare workers to ensure early identification of at-risk children and referral to appropriate services; including outreach services at transport intersections, nightspots, and other hotspots in the vicinity of the Fan Fests.
• Awareness raising for children and parents on how to protect themselves from danger while enjoying the games.
Keeping children engaged in their communities during the winter school holidays and providing them with structured activities that take inspiration from the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ will be key to enhancing their development and life skills.

UNICEF will use its Sport for Development programme as a conduit to educate South African youth on the risks of sexual exploitation and abuse, child labour and trafficking during the June/July 2010 period and beyond.

The Sport for Development is an integral part of the Safe and Child Friendly School initiative, a programme that transforms schools into rights-based and inclusive, academically effective, safe, health-promoting and gender-sensitive places of learning. Building linkages and partnerships with the surrounding communities is also an important principle and practice of the initiative.

An important focus of the Sport for Development programme is to empower boys and girls to adopt healthy lifestyles and prevent HIV infection as well as help reduce risky and harmful behaviour through the avenue of sports.

In collaboration with the Department of Education and community development partners, UNICEF is organising 21 sports festivals in school communities reaching up to 2,000 children per site, as parallel activities during 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

In addition to creating awareness about child safety issues, the sport festivals provide the ideal background to advocate for the continued improvement of sport fields and equipment in the majority of South African schools, townships and rural areas.

Advocacy on the vision for 2015

As a part of the United Nations (UN) family in South Africa, UNICEF has supported a national awareness raising campaign to promote the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This UN-led initiative is taking advantage of the spotlight on the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ to urge a broad range of role players to work robustly on reaching the eight Goals in Africa.

As part of the campaign, eight of Africa’s best known musical talents have teamed up to produce a song called ‘8 Goals for Africa’. They include Baaba Maal from Senegal, Eric Wainaina of Kenya and UNICEF Goodwill ambassadors Angélique Kidjo of Benin, and Yvonne Chaka Chaka of South Africa.

The UNDP Administrator and Chairperson of the UN Development Group, Ms. Helen Clark, launched the MDG song on 14 May in Alexandra, Johannesburg.

Accompanied by a music video, the song will be disseminated free of charge locally and internationally, before, during and after the football tournament. It can be downloaded from iTunes and MXit, and viewed on YouTube. The performing artists will also make special appearances during the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ to promote the MDGs and call for action.

Spreading the message about children’s rights

UNICEF has negotiated support from a number of private sector, media and communications partners to support the dissemination of key messages and images related to child protection and sport for development.

- **Saatchi and Saatchi** donated free creative expertise to UNICEF to develop the imaging and messaging for the child friendly spaces and the Red Card campaign.
- **Game-On** will include a dedicated UNICEF page on this website to promote the Sport for Development Programme and the sport festivals.
- **Total South Africa** will disseminate the little red cards through its service stations.
- **loveLife** will distribute the little red cards and other information to its Y Centres around the country.
- **The South African Tourism Authority** will disseminate the red card information leaflets through hotel rooms and car rental companies.
- **Balfour Group** electronic messages will help generate awareness about the benefit of sport and play in the development of children through displays on 3D television screens at three international airports in South Africa from 4 May to 17 July 2010.
- **MXit** mobile-based social networking platform will provide channels for UNICEF to address its predominantly child and youth audience of around 11 million about personal safety.
UNICEF-supported programmes in the run up to, during and after the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ will have both an immediate and long-term impact on the lives of vulnerable boys and girls.

In the short-run:
- Child protection professionals will be better equipped to counter risks linked to the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.
- An estimated 12,000 unattended children in each of the FIFA Fan Fests will be kept safe.
- Referral services will be set up for at least 450 children who need refuge in shelters, healthcare, legal help and counseling.
- South African families and children will have better knowledge of how to prevent and protect themselves from abuse, exploitation and trafficking.
- Over one million people will be reached with key messages on child protection through the Red Card campaign.
- Major travel and tourism operators will adhere to codes of conduct to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse of children.
- A broad spectrum of the public in South Africa, including thousands of foreign visitors, will be made aware of inappropriate, exploitive or illegal behaviour related to children through information material placed in 35,000 hotel rooms, all Hertz and Eurocar rental car and the FIFA Fan Fests, and through billboards and 3D signs at three major South African airports.
- Through a partnership with local coaches and sports organisations, children will be engaged in structured and supervised activities and empowered with life skills and information to prevent HIV and violence.

In the long-term:
- South Africa will have a more effective, integrated and sustainable child protection service delivery system;
- Better trained professionals to prevent and respond to child abuse, exploitation and trafficking;
- Enhanced partnerships between the government and civil society to protect children;
- Sport for Development, as an essential element of children’s education, will be a critical avenue to promote children’s physical, mental and emotional well-being as well as a key strategy to provide life skills to empower children and young people.

For more information contact:
Yvonne Duncan, Chief of External Relations and Strategic Partnerships, UNICEF South Africa
E-mail: yduncan@unicef.org
Phone: +27 (0) 12 354 8201
Fax: +27 (0) 12 354 8293/4
Cell: +27 (0) 82 561 3970
Website: http://www.unicef.org/southafrica