

Contribution to the End of Decade Report on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non- Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)

The United Nations Children's Fund **(UNICEF)**

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Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace: UNICEF ACTIONS

UN Resolution A/RES/53/243

I. OVERARCHING INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF A CULTURE OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE

UN Study on Violence Against Children

A key activity promoting a culture of peace and non-violence is the UN Study on Violence Against Children, requested by the General Assembly in 2002. Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro was appointed as Independent Expert to lead the Study, supported by UNICEF, WHO and the OHCHR. The Study provides a detailed global picture of the nature, extent and causes of violence against children, and proposes clear recommendations to prevent and limit such violence from occurring.

The study focuses on the nature and extent of violence against children in five settings:

- Home and family
- Schools and educational settings
- Other institutional settings (orphanages, children in conflict with the law)
- Community and on the street
- Work situations

The Study was presented to the General Assembly in 2007, including 12 Recommendations and proposed the establishment for a Special Representative to the UN Secretary General. The Special Representative on Violence Against Children was established in 2009 and is supported by UNICEF.

Actions promoted by the study include: i) Ratification of international agreements to protect children rights, and national legal reform; ii) National plans of action to end and prevent violence against children; iii) Data collection, research and analysis on violence against children; iv) Advocacy, awareness-raising and training to increase understanding of violence against children; v) Programmes to support parents and develop their parenting skills in protecting children, and vi) Engaging young people themselves are active in many ways in preventing and responding to violence.

Monitoring and Reporting of Grave Violations Against Children

UNICEF, together with the OSRSG-CAAC, co-chairs the Steering Committee on Monitoring and Reporting of Grave Violations Against Children. The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on grave violations against children in armed conflicts was established in 2005 with the adoption of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1612 and monitors 6 categories of violations. Currently, the MRM is being implemented in 14 countries. UNICEF has been engaged in the MRM from the outset, and has also played an active role in providing technical advice during the negotiations leading to the adoption of resolutions 1612 (2005),

1882 (August 2009) and 1888 (September 2009). The overall objective of UNICEF's engagement is to reduce and prevent grave violations against children in armed conflict.

The MRM strengthens the protective environment for children and helps prevent grave violations against children on two main fronts: i) Through enhanced accountability for grave violations by publicly 'naming and shaming' perpetrators, stronger linkages to justice systems, enhanced linkages between the Security Council Working Group on CAAC and the sanctions committee; and ii) By establishing the high-level negotiating platform and stressing the essential need to engage with parties to the conflict in order to develop and implement action plans and secure other commitments to address all grave violations against children. The MRM also provides an improved situational analysis of the impact of armed conflict on children particularly relating to the nature and frequency of grave violations against children, which enables a greater understanding of the effect of conflict on children, leading to an improved response and targeted community based prevention activities to enhance the protective environment for children. Informed programming at the country level can also prevent violations, for example, successful community-based reintegration of former child soldiers makes re-recruitment of children less likely.

II. ACTIONS TO FOSTER A CULTURE OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE

- UNICEF continues to support follow up to the Paris Commitments and Paris Principles on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (2007), in particular, implementation of the Paris Commitments and Principles, enabling exchange of information on lessons learned; the prevention of child recruitment; and support for reintegration programmes, including monitoring and reporting on compliance by parties to armed conflict. In 2009, armed forces and armed groups in a number of countries released over 5,000 children, with significant progress taking place in Burundi through the release of the remaining children associated with the National Liberation Forces. The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) released children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and forces in the Central African Republic, North and South Sudan and Sri Lanka also disbanded militarized children. Programmes supporting the reintegration of armed children and other conflict-affected children continue to be implemented and strengthened. Other positive recent developments include action plans for the release of children associated with armed forces in Nepal, the Philippines and South Sudan.
- UNICEF's approach to armed violence reduction, while relatively new, is underpinned by an awareness of the interplay of numerous social, economic and political causes of armed violence. In 2010, UNICEF finalized its participation in a joint Armed Violence Prevention Programme (AVPP) with UNDP, United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs, UNODC, UN-Habitat and WHO. The initiative promotes common policy guidance, strategies, effective partnerships and programmes for the prevention of armed violence at the global and local levels. The strategy is

focused on global policy development and advocacy, research and data collection, and support to country-level interventions in collaboration with government partners. The first inter-agency AVPP mission was to Kenya, to assist the UN Country Team in developing a comprehensive multisectoral armed violence reduction programme. UNICEF has also collaborated with governments in initiating armed violence reduction interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica and Thailand, serving as pilots for future expansion of work in this area.

- UNICEF has contributed to the global dialogue on the causes and effects of armed violence, bringing the perspective of children to key policy and political documents, including the Secretary-General's Report on Armed Violence and Development and the Secretary-General's Report on Disarmament and Development. The direct impact of armed violence, specifically killing or maiming, may be the same for adults and children, but the indirect impacts can differ significantly. For example, the loss or disability of a child's parent or caregiver can have far-reaching effects in terms of health and nutrition, and may be the cause of children dropping out of school. UNICEF's work informs other global processes, such as the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the upcoming UN General Assembly resolution on armed violence, and the recent process of launching the Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence and the MDGs which will mobilize political commitment to armed violence reduction and programming at the country level. In 2009, UNICEF also contributed to the development of International Small Arms Control Standards, which will be finalized in 2010.
- UNICEF promotes mine action and mine risk education projects in some 20 conflict-affected countries including Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Sudan, working to strengthen national capacity to deal with landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) that pose a direct threat to the well-being of children and their families. Results at the country level included integration of mine/ERW risk education into schools, development of injury surveillance systems, and policy support and advocacy for the rights of victims of landmines/ERW and other persons with disabilities, with a focus on children. In response to the conflict in Pakistan, which generated a large number of internally displaced persons and landmine/ERW contamination, UNICEF took the lead in coordinating the mine risk education activities of a number of non-governmental organizations. At the global level, UNICEF continues to advocate for implementation of and universal adherence to the Mine Ban Treaty, Convention on Cluster Munitions, Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other legal instruments. Working with UNDP and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), a revised set of gender guidelines for mine action programmes was developed to support the mainstreaming of gender into planning and implementation of mine action and mine risk education.
- UNICEF has played a lead role in providing research, documentation and analysis on

children's involvement and children's roles in processes of truth-seeking, accountability and reconciliation in contexts of armed conflict and political violence. The book, *Children and Transitional Justice: Truth-telling, Accountability and Reconciliation*, co-authored by UNICEF and the Human Rights Program at Harvard Law School and published in 2010 by Harvard University Press, explores questions raised when children's issues – and children themselves – are prioritized in justice and truth-seeking and in reconciliation processes, and it demonstrates that children can make a positive and decisive difference in these efforts. Moreover, on the basis of evidence and analysis undertaken, it is determined that if transitional justice processes are undertaken without involving children, it not only fails to comply with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – the most universally ratified international instrument – but also compromises the outcome of those processes. Issues include the protection of child witnesses in international courts and tribunals, children's involvement in restorative justice and traditional processes, child-focused reparations, linking education and curriculum development to transitional justice processes, children's involvement in truth commissions and peacebuilding, and child-focused economic reform. The collaboration with Harvard Law School also led to the development of Key Principles on Children and Transitional Justice, in order to build consensus and better inform the protection and participation of children in truth, justice and reconciliation processes and to serve as groundwork for community-based peace-building and reconciliation efforts.

- UNICEF is engaged in activities to support Parliamentarians in promoting a culture of peace and non-violence, including the preparation of two Handbooks for Parliamentarians: i) Eliminating Violence Against Children, and ii) Combating Child Trafficking.
- UNICEF played a key role in the development of the “Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children” which were welcomed in the UN General Assembly Resolution adopted on 20th November 2009. The work towards the Guidelines began in 2004 with UNICEF and International Social Services’ research and advocacy programme calling for standards to improve the protection of children without parental care. The Guidelines seek to ensure that, on the one hand, children do not find themselves in out-of-home care unnecessarily, and on the other, out-of-home care provided meets the quality that corresponds to the rights and specific needs of the child concerned. The Guidelines have been very useful following the devastating earthquake in Haiti, where governmental, non-governmental institutions have been established to care for children impacted by the earthquake, fostering an environment of care and peace in the midst of a traumatic and volatile situation.

III. ACTIONS TO FOSTER A CULTURE OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE THROUGH EDUCATION

- UNICEF efforts to support more resilient education systems, and to generate or restore national ownership in post-crisis recovery, include the promotion of peace through innovative means. In Nepal, UNICEF has prioritized the protection of education from attack and strengthening peace building and conflict resolution. This includes the Schools as Zones of Peace initiative, with nearly 500 schools directly supported. In addition, there was less political interference in school governance; and an increased awareness of the importance of protecting schools. The Schools as Zones of Peace initiative has been able to reach some of the most conflict-affected communities in Nepal's southern border. In Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province the teacher mobility scheme, despite the conflict, provided transport facilities for female teachers in remote tribal areas, enabling 30,000 girls to continue their schooling.

IV. ACTIONS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- UNICEF promotes child-sensitive social protection. A recent Joint Statement on Advancing Child Sensitive Social Protection brings together UNICEF, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), HelpAge International, Hope & Homes for Children, Institute of Development Studies, International Labour Organization (ILO), Overseas Development Institute, Save the Children United Kingdom, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, in outlining vulnerabilities that children and families face, and the principles and approaches for undertaking child-sensitive social protection that can positively impact children. The Joint Statement gives priority to strengthening family resiliency and capacity to continue to care for their children. For example, in Bangladesh a conditional cash transfer helped avoid institutionalization of vulnerable children after the cyclone by supporting their extended families. Other examples include the microcredit project in the Dominican Republic, the support to articulate child-sensitive adjustments in China's health insurance and social assistance schemes, and the revolving loan scheme in Lebanon.
- A priority for sustainable economic and social development is the focus on child labour. UNICEF continues to work closely with ILO/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). Over 30 per cent of UNICEF's 70-plus programmes that address child labour involve joint programming and/or joint assessments to promote programme and UN coherence. Both UNICEF and the ILO increasingly use a social protection approach to reduce child labour. UNICEF, ILO and the World Bank have undertaken joint research on child labour which has identified rising child labour rates in Africa. Other findings include the significant threat to child labour gains in Latin America and the Caribbean posed by the global recession. In India, increased access to schools significantly reduced rural child labour

rates, while increased household income had the largest impact on reducing urban child labour rates. UNICEF's In 2009, inter-agency collaboration on child labour has encouraged increased joint research, programming and innovative policy development. This includes increased collaboration and technical input into the development of a new international instrument on domestic labour, which is on the agenda at the International Labour Conference to be hosted by ILO in June 2010.

- UNICEF has provided technical advice to corporate partners including Telenor, IKEA and Norwegian Investment Fund to rethink sourcing, supply chains and investment patterns, particularly in the area of agricultural child labour, where 69 per cent of all child labour takes place. Collaboration with the private sector also aided in preventing sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. By supporting the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism at global and country levels, particularly in Latin America, Asia and, increasingly, Africa, 33 new companies adhered to the Code and committed to preventing the use of their facilities and services for the sexual exploitation of children. As of December 2009, 951 companies in 35 countries have signed the Code.
- Collaboration with the private sector has also been strengthened to protect children from violence in sports. The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre initiated work in 2008 that led to the formation of a UNICEF internal Steering Group for the development of standards of care for international corporate sports partnerships. UNICEF provided technical guidance in the design of protective systems for children, as outlined in the updated Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) regulations on children: addressing recruitment and vulnerability/risk pattern analysis on the ground, management systems, protection and care of minors at club level, and improving regulatory frameworks for monitoring and enforcement mechanisms amid sporting bodies and government

V. ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR ALL HUMAN RIGHTS

The human rights approach is the foundation for all UNICEF programme development and practical action, as well as informing advocacy and policy development. UNICEF is guided by the principles of the CRC and CEDAW in its efforts to influence public policies, prioritize children's needs, and develop and assist programmes benefiting children. UNICEF also monitors the status of children's rights and reports on progress, viewed through a human rights lens.

- Birth registration establishes a child's legal identity, which is an essential first step in safeguarding children's right to protection and assistance. It is also essential in establishing children's social, cultural and national identity, providing the foundation for citizenship and civic participation. UNICEF supports birth registration activities in

about 80 countries, addressing obstacles such as lack of access to vulnerable populations in remote and rural areas and the prohibitive distance and costs for parents to travel to civil registration offices. A particularly successful approach has been the integration of birth registration into health services, such as coupling birth registration and immunization campaigns in the Democratic Republic of Congo, linking the birth registration system to midwifery service networks in Sudan, and integrating a birth registration component into hospitals and health facilities, as implemented in the Dominican Republic, Georgia and Namibia. UNICEF continues to raise awareness of the importance of birth registration; support legal reform and the drafting of national policies; build capacity of government officials and community leaders; facilitate data collection; and promote innovative methods of birth registration, such as the use of mobile telephones and computerized registration methods. Mobile registration has been especially successful in reaching isolated areas in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Mozambique.

VI. ACTIONS TO ENSURE EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

Gender equality is a cross-cutting theme that runs through UNICEF programmes. Essential to UNICEF's approach to gender equality is promoting social change through community-level engagement. Key activities include:

- The UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on accelerating the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting through advocacy, legal reform, civil society engagement and human rights education. Addressing social norms, including discriminatory norms, the Programme is currently supporting efforts in 12 countries and has contributed to major declarations of abandonment of FGM/C and child marriage, including in countries of very high prevalence of FGM/C such as Somalia and Gambia.
- In Asia, UNICEF has applied the social norms perspective to address child marriage and other child protection violations. For example, in India, UNICEF supports the Hindi television soap opera *Kyunki...jeena issi ka naam hai* (Because... that's what life is) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which addresses many of the social norms related to child marriage and gender equality, and reaches out to urban and rural populations in 10 Hindi-speaking states.
- In all regions, UNICEF has increased support for the application of the social norms perspective to violence against children, also highlighting gender dynamics in designing programme response, for example, differences in how boys and girls are socialized and disciplined. A number of countries have undertaken research on child-rearing practices and corporal punishment of children in homes and schools. Some countries have supported social awareness and mobilization programmes to change

attitudes and behaviours and promote non-violent, alternative ways of discipline. In Europe, half of the government ministers have signed the Council of Europe campaign 'Raise your hand against smacking', which advocates the prohibition of corporal punishment in all member States. National campaigns have been launched in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. In Barbados, support of corporal punishment in schools fell from 69 per cent in 2004 to 54 per cent in 2009 according to an opinion poll. This may partly be attributed to the work of UNICEF and partners in raising awareness among parents and teachers about the negative effects of physical punishment on children, and increasing their knowledge about alternative, non-violent discipline.

- In collaboration with partners, UNICEF is focusing on prevention of sexual violence against children – a major area of focus since the UN Study on Violence against Children and World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. In September, UNICEF together with four UN organizations – World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNFPA and Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS – the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the private sector (Nduna Foundation and Grupo ABC) established a groundbreaking global initiative to address sexual violence against girls. Inspired by the National Study on Violence against Children and Young Women in Swaziland, the initiative supports the undertaking of national population-based studies on sexual violence in various countries and the development of programmes that prevent and respond to sexual violence through strengthening formal and informal child protection systems, while addressing social norms that perpetuate gender stereotyping and discrimination, in line with the UNICEF CPS. Throughout the year, the initiative was expanded to the United Republic of Tanzania. A number of other countries in Africa and Asia demonstrated interest in undertaking similar studies and programming. Sexual violence against girls is also part of the broader area of gender-based violence– a reality that persists due to deeply rooted discriminatory social norms. The Democratic Republic of the Congo provides an example of an integrated strategy to address gender-based violence, which moves beyond direct service provision to strengthen systems and promote social change.

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