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Notes

[Archives: CF/NYH/SP/SUM; Folder: S0355.] Contents: Section 1: Members of the Planning Committee - Schedule of (remaining) meetings and activities; Section 2: Schedule and Programme of the World Summit for Children; Section 3: Draft Declaration of the World Summit for Children - Draft Plan of Action; Section 4: Report of Meetings: - 1st, 2nd, 3rd Meetings of the Planning Committee - Meetings of the Working Group on Format - ~~Meetings of the Working Group on the Declaration - Statement of Agreement of the six Initiating Governments -~~

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EDWIN R AMEZ

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Middle Childhood

A concept paper developed for the
Tarrytown Group, UNICEF New York,
September 1998



UNICEF /Rwanda/ Lemoyne. HQ96-0702

TOR task 1. Assess global context, challenge, unmet needs and opportunities beyond 2000, state of the art knowledge, validated programme approaches and key lessons learned from the 1990's.

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

1. Introduction

Middle Childhood is often defined by the age ranges which precede and come after it: early childhood and adolescence. In this context Middle Childhood refers to children aged 6 to 12. Researchers talk about this period of growth and development as one with not much change and differentiation. However, such comments may be more of a reflection of the fact that this period of life has been less thoroughly researched than have others. It is a matter for some concern that while most UNICEF programmes reach, and several types of programmes specifically target for children in this period of the life cycle, few researchers claim to provide much guidance about what differentiates it as a period of growth and development. Where developmental psychologists who do provide indicators for development, they do so in ways which leave little space for the types of influence which children have on their own development, and the particular contexts in which children live and grow.

The significance of this period of the life cycle to the well being of the child is clearly evident in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*. While emphasizing the survival and development of the child at every age up to 18 years, its call for non-discrimination; for the best interests of the child; child participation; preventive health care; compulsory, free primary education; as well as for protection from abuse, armed conflict, child labour, and sexual exploitation, is particularly relevant for this middle childhood period. In addressing the whole child, every aspect of development is addressed in the CRC, including the following, which are necessary for the well being of this middle childhood period:

- **Physical development**, where good health and nutrition and physical activity, along with safe and clean water and environment, are the basis for survival and growth
- **Cognitive development**, (the ability to solve novel problems of increasing complexity), established in part by acquisition of literacy, numeracy, life skills and cultural understanding, on the one hand, and by active participation on the other.
- **Emotional development**, which includes the development of adequate self-esteem, family attachment, feelings of love, acceptance and effectiveness, and the ability to express emotions including love and anger appropriately for which patterns of positive care and attachment, best found in families is needed.
- **Social, moral and spiritual development**, which includes concern for others, sharing, a sense of belonging, ability to co-operate with others, to give and receive support, distinction of right from wrong, resourcefulness, empathy, ability to withstand peer pressure and other capacities for living in a social world, which are facilitated by positive interactions with significant others in a widening circle of socialisation.

The processes of cognitive, physical, social, moral and emotional development are indivisible and interactive. There are a number of givens which can help us to better understand the world

of middle childhood:

- Children living in different environments, cultures, and social classes, are exposed to different forms and values of experience in families, with neighbours and friends, and in school. For individual children, this results in the appearance of different competencies at different times and means that children's multiple capacities and processes of development should be fostered in different ways.
- There is a continuity between the experiences and changes of Early Childhood at the one end of this age range, and the experiences and changes of Adolescence at the other.
- Within any culture, not all children are regarded nor cared for, equally: discrimination is based on perceptions of gender, disability, culture, class, caste and other reasons for discrimination, as well as on the types of care with which children are provided.
- Children's development is determined to a great extent by the degree to which they can shape and actively participate in their own learning experiences and by the opportunities offered to them.
- Personal and environmental factors have a range of effects on children's wellbeing.
- Children in this age group are often highly resilient and adaptable despite exposure to many forms of risk, and often have some capacity for developing their own forms of protection. However there are many shocks to the system that children suffer from which they may not rebound, such as severe malnutrition and its devastating effects of lifelong learning abilities.
- Family acceptance and support, and later, acceptance by peers and significant others in the widening society, is important for the cognitive, emotional, social and moral development of children in middle childhood.
- Play continues to be an important developmental tool in middle childhood.
- The family (in whatever form) and increasingly, for this age group the community, continues to be a place of nurture and support for children. The school is a major social institution for meeting children's basic learning needs, with religious institutions, youth groups, non-formal education programmes and community groups still playing major roles in many societies. The challenge is to create seamless webs between such institutions, and strong links between school and non-school learning opportunities.
- Girls, in particular undergo rapid physical growth towards the end of this age group, and at the onset of puberty.

1.1 Global Context

In 1997, the number of children between the ages of 5-14 was estimated to be 1.1 billion, most of whom, live in developing countries. The problems faced by children in middle childhood are complex in nature and often relate to aspects of their growth and development. In many societies, the dual role demanded by labour combined with the learning process places special pressure on the mental, physical and psychosocial condition of these children. In the light of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, many children's rights remain unfulfilled.

Co-ordinating efforts to better fulfil the Human Rights of Children and Women

The UN Charter which identifies as one of the three purposes of the Organisation the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights command UNICEF for all without discrimination of any kind. UNICEF's Mission Statement reiterates this. It does so by stating that UNICEF: is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child; advocates for children's rights; responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children; and promotes the equal rights of women and girls. Most recently the UN Secretary General stressed that a major task of the United Nations is "to enhance its human rights programme and fully integrate it into the broad range of the Organization's activities".

The strategy for achieving a system wide co-ordination is titled the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Within UNDAF, the UN Country Team will continually update its knowledge on how, taken together, the international instruments and conferences, and General Assembly Resolutions, offer a strong conceptual basis for development co-operation and for the United Nations future role in these areas.

Accordingly, the two major sources of human rights information are:

i. Human Rights instruments: Where governments have ratified human rights treaties there is a legal obligation to implement the standards. In addition, the government is required to submit progress reports to a Committee of experts. These reports and the Committee's feedback contain a wealth of information regarding the situation of women and children in the country as well as information on the areas of priority concern.

For the Middle childhood period and for UNICEF's work generally, the instrument of most relevance is the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It should be borne in mind that other instruments exist which may provide further information for the setting of standards and establishing indicators (e.g. on adoption, juvenile justice, and disability). Article 2, Paragraph 1 of the CRC states that "State parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or status". CEDAW also underpins UNICEF's mandate and mission. Both of these human rights instruments recognise the inherent dignity and equality of each individual as a human being and their rights to self-determination, peace and security. Both CRC and CEDAW recognise that women and children have specific

needs that have been historically neglected or overlooked by societies, neglect which is both a cause and a result of the specific forms of discrimination these groups suffer.

The overarching principles of the CRC: non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to participate and have one's views considered and the right to survive and develop must be considered in developing goals and implementing programmes for Middle Childhood. In programming for children aged 6-12, UNICEF will need to move to more integrated, cross-sectoral and decentralized activities brought about by processes which involve children aged 6-12 and those who care for them.¹

ii. World Conferences and global summits are the second major source of human rights information. All the world conferences² emphasise the importance of respect for and protection of human rights and propose plans or programmes of action to further their implementation.

Both these sources are increasingly gaining attention as the UN moves to introduce system wide co-ordination in the UNDAF. The revised guidelines for UNDAF now cite these sources and call for the development of indicators in the areas of human rights and development.

Unmet Needs/ Rights Unfulfilled

A review of the situation of children in the middle childhood period against the rights stipulated in the CRC, reveals that many children's rights remain unfulfilled. The following paragraphs summarise the nature and magnitude of some of the major problems faced by children during middle childhood:

CRC recognises: the right to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work deemed hazardous, that interferes with schooling or harmful to the child's health, physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development:

- The number of working children in the developing world (aged 5-14) may be increasing and has reached 250 million, based on 1996 ILO data. About 60 percent of them are in Asia and 32 percent in Africa. About half, 120 million children, work full time. The resurgence in child labour in some parts of the world is due to poverty, as well as to age-old expectations and traditions of child labour. Work may be the major

¹ UNICEF New York (1998) A Human Rights Approach to UNICEF programming for Children and Women: What it is, and some changes it will bring Unpublished paper

² The following Conferences make specific mentions of relevance to Middle Childhood: World Summit for Children, New York (1990); World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien (1990) World Conference on Environment and Development, XX (1992); International Conference on Nutrition, XX (1992); World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna (1993); World Summit for Social Development, XX (1995); World Conference on Women, Beijing (1995); Second UN Conference on Human Settlements, XX (1996); World Conference on Population, Cairo (1996); Stockholm Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (1996); Amsterdam and Oslo Conferences on Child Labour (1997)

context within which children are exploited. An additional number of 150-200 million children in this age group do unpaid domestic work, many of them girls.



Brazil/ Horner, 92-122 UNICEF

For children in the middle childhood period, the CRC states that they should not be recruited, participate in hostilities and have their rights protected in conflicts:

- In the past decade, 2 million children are estimated to have been killed during armed conflicts, while 6 million were injured or became permanently disabled. Over 1 million were separated from their families and 12 million left homeless. The increasing number of armed conflicts has led to an increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs), many of whom are children in the 6-12 age group. In 1997, there were 50 million refugees and IDPs in total, an estimated 50 percent of whom were children. Of the refugees alone, 7 million are estimated to be children.

CRC calls for the protection and care of all children and of the civilian population in general in armed conflict:

- The physical environment in at least 68 countries is contaminated by more than 110 million landmines, killing hundreds and maiming 26,000 people every year. It is

estimated that 40-45% of those killed and maimed, are children. Young children below the age of 6 rarely survive the impact of the landmine explosion as their vital organs are too close to the ground. Children as young as 7-18 years step on landmines while they collect firewood for fuel, water, tend to livestock or play in the fields.

CRC calls for compulsory, free primary education for all:

- At least 130 million children of primary school age, mostly in Asia and Africa (approximately 40 and 50 percent respectively), are not in school. Although the gap in enrolment between boys and girls has narrowed, approximately two thirds of those not in school are girls. Given home and work responsibilities, as well as the irrelevance of many forms of schooling, children's participation in school may be short-lived and learning achievement, negligible.

CRC states that disabled children must have effective access to and receive education, training, health care and rehabilitation services:

- There are 150 million children with disabilities, about 50 percent of whom are in this age group. Of these, only 2 percent are attending school.³ Less than 5% of all children with disabilities receive rehabilitation of any kind.⁴ Such children are often not provided with learning opportunities at home, tend to be hidden away, and thus become invisible.

CRC stipulates that all children enjoy the highest attainable standard of health; treatment facilities; have access to preventive health care education and services:

- No age-specific global level data is available on the problem of HIV/AIDS, but there are many countries where a significant portion of children, particularly girls, are major victims of this problem. In 1997, 590,000 new cases of HIV infection and 460,000 cases of death due to AIDS were reported among the 0-15 age group. Although very few infections and deaths occur in the age range 6-12, by far the largest issue is the impact on AIDS-affected children. 8.2 million cases of AIDS orphans have been reported in this age group. Aids orphans often assume parenting responsibilities themselves. In Zambia, for example, an estimated 11% of households are child-headed.

CRC calls for the provision of adequate nutritious foods and the development of primary health care:

- The growth and development potential of a large proportion of children is compromised due to poor health and nutrition status during middle childhood. The effects of protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies on learning

³ UNESCO: Salamanca Conference on Special Needs Education, 1994

⁴ WHO In 1989 the figure was 2-3%; Training in the Community for Persons with Disabilities, 1989

achievement and poor physical growth are widespread. Malnutrition during early childhood continues through middle childhood, adolescence and adulthood, particularly in girls and women. For example, in South Asia where half of all children are underweight, 60 per cent of women themselves are underweight. In sub-Saharan Africa, where nearly one third of children are malnourished, 20 percent of women are underweight.

CRC calls for the provision of adequate nutritious foods and the development of primary health care:

- Among micronutrients, iron deficiency anaemia, particularly in girls, is the most common followed by iodine deficiency disorders. The effect of anaemia in this age group and during early childhood is associated with anaemia in adult women, which contributes to 20 to 23 percent of all post-partum deaths in Africa and Asia. In most countries in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, 30 to 40 percent of women are anaemic. Vitamin A and Iodine deficiency are the major causes of blindness and mental retardation. Apart from dietary deficiency and poor care practices, worm infestations and malaria are important causes of high rate of anaemia in some countries. Both of these have deleterious effects on school attendance and achievement.

CRC calls for the provision of clean drinking water and basic environmental sanitation:

- There are currently some three billion people in developing countries without access to sanitation and there are indications that these numbers are increasing. One billion people still do not have access to safe water. About 25 percent of these people are children, and for these children, potential growth could be affected.

CRC calls for the provision of clean drinking water and basic environmental sanitation:

- Health problems related to environmental degradation are on the rise in the developing world. The middle childhood age group is more vulnerable to some of these health problems because they are outside playing in these unhealthy environments. For example, the incidence of helminth infection peaks in children of this age for precisely this reason.

CRC calls for the protection of children from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as for the abolition of traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children:

- In many societies, violence, sexual exploitation, incest and abuse, as well as traditional harmful practices which include FGM affect industrialised and developing, children in this age group, particularly girls. While global data on gender-based violence against women and girls is not available, a number of national sample surveys reported that

27-34 percent of women suffered sexual abuse during childhood, much of which takes place within the family⁵. Many of them experienced attempted rapes before the age of 12⁶.

CRC calls for the protection of children from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as for the abolition of traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children:

- In recent years there has been an increase in the incidence of adults using children under the age of criminal responsibility to carry out criminal activities ranging from house-breaking to the transportation and distribution of illicit drugs. Such activities are increasingly organised by criminal groups. In Russia, the number of adults charged with involving children in criminal activity reportedly tripled between 1989 and 1994 to almost 21,000 cases. Similar activities have also been reported in Italy and in Pakistan.⁷ There is also an inconsistency between countries as to the age at which the child is considered to be criminally responsible - in many cases it is as low as 7 years. In addition, as the welfare net shrinks in some countries, there is a tendency for children who should have been cared for and protected by the State to fall into the juvenile justice system by default.

CRC recognises the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts:

- Access to age-appropriate and safe leisure and play time and facilities appears to be limited for this age group, with urban planners rarely considering the developmental needs of this period in the life cycle in their urban planning and policy.

For many children, unmet needs multiply: the problems that face many children during the period of Middle Childhood collectively create negative development synergies to make life opportunities sparse and often unattainable.

Root Causes

Political stability, good governance, effective macro-economic policies, as well as a sufficient allocation of public expenditure to quality basic services, are some of the factors that determine the quality of life of children and women. The status of women affects the status of children. Despite the international standards and commitments and propelled by a lack of political will, lowered ODA and poorly targeted international policy, the world that children live in today is one of increasing conflict, poverty and inequality. An

⁵ United Nations, The World's Women 1995

⁶ 26 percent of postgraduate students interviewed in India reported having been sexually abused before the age of 12.

⁷ UNICEF Innocenti Digest January 1998, p.6

estimated number of 1 billion people are estimated to be living in poverty. The purchasing power of families, especially in the CEE/CIS region and Sub-Saharan Africa, has dropped considerably since 1990. The magnitude of poverty in many countries, especially in Africa⁸, is a threat to the political stability of these countries, resulting in a **vicious cycle of poverty and conflict**. This is coupled by a **lack of political will and commitment in many countries to allocate public expenditures to basic social services** and hence to the alleviation of poverty⁹. The ability of governments to provide basic services is further compromised by the rising debt, which in Sub-Saharan Africa has already surpassed its GNP.

Poverty, as a root cause for the challenges facing children, is accompanied by a rapid rate of urbanisation, increasing gaps between rich and poor (e.g. economic, technological and information gaps) and deterioration of the environment. Within this context, discrimination, for example, on the basis of ethnic and class differences, both intra-societal and inter-societal, continues to be practised and affect children. Of particular concern to this age group is gender-based discrimination, where the values which determine the status of girls and women, a lack of awareness of rights, and lack of appropriate legislation and policy, as well as their effective implementation, become firmly entrenched in the middle childhood period.

⁸ In 1992, about 45 percent of approximately 525 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa were estimated to be living below the poverty line.

⁹ According to the World Bank, no more than 10 African governments have explicitly identified poverty reduction as their major policy objective.



UNICEF /Myanmar / John Chiasson, 90-007

1.2 Challenges and Opportunities for Action

Challenges:

The specific challenges faced during middle childhood involve:

Ensuring a healthy and safe environment for children's growth and development

- protection of all children from violence, exploitation, incest and abuse, as well as harmful traditional practices, both within and outside the home and family, as well inside and outside school, and in the community.
- adequate health and nutrition interventions
- equal access to food and health care for girls and boys
- clean, safe environments
- access to recreation, play and sports activities for healthy physical and mental development
- combatting the devastating effects of the global AIDS pandemic on the health and wellbeing of children
- avoiding the shifting of cost burdens for health to families because this results in health interventions becoming inaccessible for children in this age group

Ensuring optimum learning opportunities for all children

- ensuring that the home and family, the community and the school provide optimum

learning opportunities and stable, supportive learning environments for all children, where play and participation are encouraged

- ensuring that the transition from home to school is smooth for children, parents, and schools
- ensuring access to and completion of, quality basic education for all children, especially for girls
- ensuring access for children with disabilities to inclusive schools and meeting their special educational needs
- ensuring access to community-based rehabilitation services for children with special physical and psycho-social needs
- assessing learning achievement and taking steps to improve it, especially for children at risk
- defining learning outcomes for schooling related to knowledge, skills, attitudes and values
- promoting diversified opportunities for learning
- promoting behaviour development for healthy practices: so that learning promotes good health, just as good health promotes learning. This will include age-appropriate sex education, pregnancy, STD and HIV/AIDS prevention, especially for girls
- eliminating gender bias in the learning process in schools, the family and the community

Reaching and protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach

- eliminating children's harmful work
- providing basic social services for children in slums and informal urban areas
- providing protection to especially vulnerable children such as those affected by armed conflict, emergencies, AIDS, and disabilities, as well as girls, ethnic minority and indigenous children, and promoting their positive development and participation in society
- meeting the basic learning needs of all children who are vulnerable or hard to reach
- being aware that communication advances, which continually bring the plight of poor children to the notice of those who, could respond, often tends to lead to compassion fatigue, even when children are the issue.
- eliminating discrimination based on disability, gender, ethnicity, and class
- eliminating commercial sexual abuse and exploitation
- preventing recruitment of child soldiers
- providing for physical and psycho-social rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflict
- protecting children from the dangers of landmines in countries affected by armed conflict

Strengthening the capacity of the individual, the family, the community, the state and civil society to participate for children's development

- raising awareness of individual children's rights, especially to participation, and then ensuring their participation in decisions that affect their lives
- providing access to information about the rights of children who are vulnerable and hard to reach
- strengthening the capacity of the family to cope with economic, emotional, educational and social issues affecting the middle childhood group

- providing opportunities for mothers, fathers and other caregivers to learn about children's needs for protection, health, nutrition, education, growth and development and to meet such needs once they have learned about them.
- strengthening the capacity of the community to work in partnership with the state and other parts of civil society to guarantee children's rights
- strengthening the state to develop policies and systems of good governance (eg in health, education, information collection and dissemination) in partnership with civil society (according to the comparative advantage of each), in the best interests of the child, and to meet its obligations to children
- developing and strengthening the capacity of NGOs, CBOs and the private sector to work together to ensure children's rights.

Growing disparities between rich and poor in all countries increases the difficulties of all of the challenges listed above.



UNICEF /Ecuador, J. Horner C-104

Opportunities:

The challenges noted above are matched by new or growing opportunities for protecting and advancing the interests of children aged 6 – 12. Common to all of these is an increased awareness of the influence of protection, of gender and other forms of discrimination in the lives of children and women, and a focus on ensuring children's rights are met.

Ensuring a healthy and safe environment for children's growth and development

- advances in health, sanitation, water and nutrition provide new opportunities for ensuring a healthy and safe environment for children
- greater awareness in communities and families to protect and secure the environment through greater consultation and participation
- increased awareness of the contribution of health and nutrition to child growth and development
- awareness of child abuse indicators, support and rehabilitation services

Ensuring optimum learning opportunities for all children

- dramatic advances in information technologies offer opportunities to bring learning closer to children, families and communities and change the nature of schooling
- wider recognition of the value of children's participation offers valuable learning opportunities
- recognition of the explicit change of emphasis from access alone, to completion of quality basic education
- recognition of the importance of all sectors contributing to opportunities for children's learning
- refined understanding of what 'works' to produce quality learning opportunities
- new partnerships and opportunities for social mobilisation for children

Protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach

- a growing human rights awareness creates wider understanding of the rights and conditions of children vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, leading to a growing international commitment to eliminate child sexual exploitation and child labour
- advances in communication and transport make it easier to identify and reach vulnerable children and those in remote and hard to reach environments
- recognition of the impact of gender issues on development

Strengthening the capacity of the individual, the family, the community, the state and civil society to participate for children's development

- adoption of a range of international instruments which can be used by individuals, communities, the state and civil society to secure the rights of children
- changing paradigms of development and new frameworks for co-operation create additional opportunities for more effective international action and partners, particularly in the private sector
- accessing financial resources, of which the world has more than ever before, to address global poverty and secure the rights of all children
- the role of the state is increasingly being redefined as the monitor and guarantor of children's rights
- growth in the number and activity levels of civil society organisations
- recognition of the dynamism and place of NGOs and CBOs as partners in guaranteeing children's rights

- increased democratisation, especially in developing countries
- a bigger emphasis on decentralisation of decision-making, of community participation, of partnerships between all those who work for children's rights
- exploiting community mechanisms to prevent risk from becoming reality
- focussing on the child as a person rather than a set of problems that the child faces, may also help to bring about an intersectoral approach

1.3 Validated Programme Approaches and Key Lessons Learned

UNICEF in its work with governments, international and national partners, CSOs including local NGOs and communities can identify a range of validated programme approaches and key lessons to meet the challenges and use the opportunities presented by this decade. There is increasing awareness that mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting concern in advocacy and programme work is of utmost importance, as is understanding the pivotal role which the rights of women plays for the optimum development of children. However, there are problems in taking innovative projects to scale and sustaining interventions. The adoption of a rights approach to programming requires creating a dynamic process in which children, men and women, local communities, the state, civil society and the international community are mobilised for the protection and fulfilment of rights of women and children.

Ensuring a healthy and safe environment for children's growth and development

- Early intervention to stem the negative consequences of discrimination against girls, stereotyping of male and female roles and models of behaviour, and the assimilation of ways of thinking which accept male domination and violence against women and girls as natural, should start very early in the family, the school and in the community.
- Women's access to resources and information contributes to the wellbeing of children.
- Community participation, management and ownership of basic health and environment programmes are an essential element of sustainability.
- Effective school and community health services using screening programmes for early detection of visual, hearing, dental, health and nutritional problems, as well as mental, cognitive and emotional disabilities. Early and effective response to these problems will prevent further disabilities and handicap.
- Early treatment of malaria and worm infestations prevent anaemia, poor growth and reduced energy
- Focus on urban health and environmental issues directly affect children's growth and ability to play safely: urbanisation, poverty, poor housing leading to overcrowding, diarrhoea, tuberculosis, violence and substance abuse.
- Middle childhood is one period when access to high quality food, including micronutrient-rich foods is crucial to good growth and development.
- Combining safe water inputs in conjunction with sanitation, hygiene education, nutrition and health programmes maximises social and health benefits.
- Sanitation coverage can be accelerated through programming that stresses the

particular importance of sanitation for girls and women and through a concentration on children's rights to safe sanitation and household water security.

- Iron deficiency anaemia in many countries is a problem for both boys and girls in middle childhood. Building iron stores in the body through supplements puts girls on a stronger footing for the increased needs of adolescence.
- Regular de-worming, which a number of countries conduct through schools and control of malaria are important measures for anaemia reduction.
- Vitamin A supplementation is effective in improving immune system function and preventing blindness.
- Nutrition education for children and women needs to be based on local, preferably participatory, analyses of what dietary improvements are realistic and acceptable to children in this age group.
- Supplementary feeding programmes are likely to be effective in improving school enrolment ratios and attendance particularly among children from marginal backgrounds. The design of these interventions, however, should consider cost-effectiveness, targeting and sustainability issues and the specific socio-economic and cultural environment where they are implemented.
- Improvement of household-level caring practices, particularly psychosocial practices, is crucial for overall growth and development during middle childhood but for which little systematic programme experience is available.

Ensuring optimum learning opportunities for all children

- Primary schooling is the principal institution through which a large share of the basic learning needs of this age group are met. Experience has shown that progress in basic education provision is advanced through:
 - Establishing of quality basic education as a human right as well as a necessary social investment
 - Commitment to a systemic approach to change in education
 - A range of approaches to provision within a unified system
 - Effective community involvement, partnership and ownership
 - Limiting private costs of schooling, especially for the poor
 - Ensuring quality and relevance to limit drop-out and repetition
 - Monitoring of children's learning achievement according to defined learning outcomes, especially in literacy, numeracy and life skills
- Emphasis on girls' education is a critical strategy for increasing enrolment and achievement of both boys and girls, and reducing gender disparities
- Establishing schools in proximity to children's homes can help increase enrolments and decrease dropouts, particularly for girls
- Inclusion of children with disabilities in regular schools helps to reduce stigma and negative attitudes towards such children
- Enhancing the role of teachers to respond to the actual needs of students
- In poor communities where household access to food is a serious problem, school feeding programmes can improve learning and promote attendance and achievement

- Reduction in girls' workloads (of which a substantial portion is often water hauling) can promote learning through increased enrolment and achievement in schools.
- Health Education, targetting children in and out of school, using recreational clubs, sporting events, Scouts and Girl Guides Associations etc, can raise awareness of dangers of drugs, smoking, violence, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, and improve knowledge of hygiene and sanitation and life skills.
- Nutrition education and communication activities -formal and informal - through schools and out of school settings can be effective in behaviour change.
- Youths when trained as counsellors are better accepted by younger children to deliver messages on good health habits to prevent smoking, alcohol and substance abuse and HIV/AIDS than from preaching adults. The middle childhood age group presents a critical opportunity to prevent bad habits from developing.
- Focus on diagnosis and remediation of children with learning difficulties has received limited attention.
- Children in this age group can become agents of change; for example good hygiene practices learned at school can be transmitted to families at home and to other children in the community through Child-to Child approaches.
- Removal of barriers to rights of women and girls means understanding issues of gender socialisation of males as well as females in the education of children and in the context of families.
- Transforming gender roles within families requires sharing of familial and parenting responsibilities by men. This is also a social policy and legal issue.

Protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach

- Ensuring that the rights of the vulnerable and the hard to reach are fulfilled – i. e. children in emergencies, minority and indigenous children, children who are internally displaced or refugees, street children, children with disabilities, and girls –is one of the most challenging areas of work because there are few institutionalised mechanisms for reaching them.
- There is a need to conduct research on cultural norms affecting harmful practices such as FGM, early marriage and nutritional taboos that affect many children, in order to develop effective and preventive approaches to dealing with such practices.
- Working on issues related to child labour and other forms of exploitation requires a multisectoral approach involving private sector institutions where children work, and with families and communities where children live.
- Legislation is an essential first step but establishment of enforcement mechanisms and regular monitoring must follow-up.
- Since the causes of many of these problems are rooted in poverty, traditions and sometimes in cultural interpretation of religion, the solution lies in societal mobilization involving all partners to PREVENT the problem.
- Addressing issues of quality education, including improved learning environments, combined with a mechanism for outreach to ensure access of learning opportunities by all children, may result in protection for many kinds of vulnerable children.

- Mainstreaming of excluded groups should be the key strategy, as opposed to supporting “projects” that target these groups.
- Lack of education for refugees and displaced children continues the cycle of violence.
- Many countries lack systematic information on working children, disabled children, orphans, and other vulnerable and hard to reach groups. An important step is to bridge the gap in information in the size and distribution of these groups of children and an analysis of socio-cultural environment they live in through formative research, mapping and surveys.
- Since the public sector is not always geared towards fulfilling the rights of the most vulnerable children, working with the civil society, particularly NGOs/CBOs and advocacy/media groups in some cases may be the best short-term option.
- Ensuring that the voices of children who are vulnerable and hard to reach are heard and giving children the opportunity to identify their own needs is imperative: working with children, not only for children.

Strengthening the capacity of the individual, the family, the community, the state and civil society to participate for children’s development

- The most effective strategy is a multisectoral approach combining key elements: empowerment, quality education, and awareness of children’s rights.
- Promoting appropriate strategies for decentralising control of health, education and other basic services, while strengthening the capacities of the state, civil society organisations, communities, families and children to effectively work in partnership. This may involve, for example, the development of locally based mechanisms to trace and track children and families at risk, and active response to their problems.
- Recognising that ideas imposed from outside, no matter how well meaning, often do not lead to sustainable changes and understanding that ‘participation’ entails involving all players in both the planning and implementation of strategies.
- Because the status and rights of women to participate determines the status, opportunities and limitations of the girl child to participate, there is a need to promote respect for CEDAW and in particular the rights of women to participate at all levels of decision making and society.
- Capacity building of partners and from partners to understand and accept participation as a right is necessary.
- The need to expand the range of partners to non-conventional ones such as the corporate sector and trade unions.

Middle Childhood

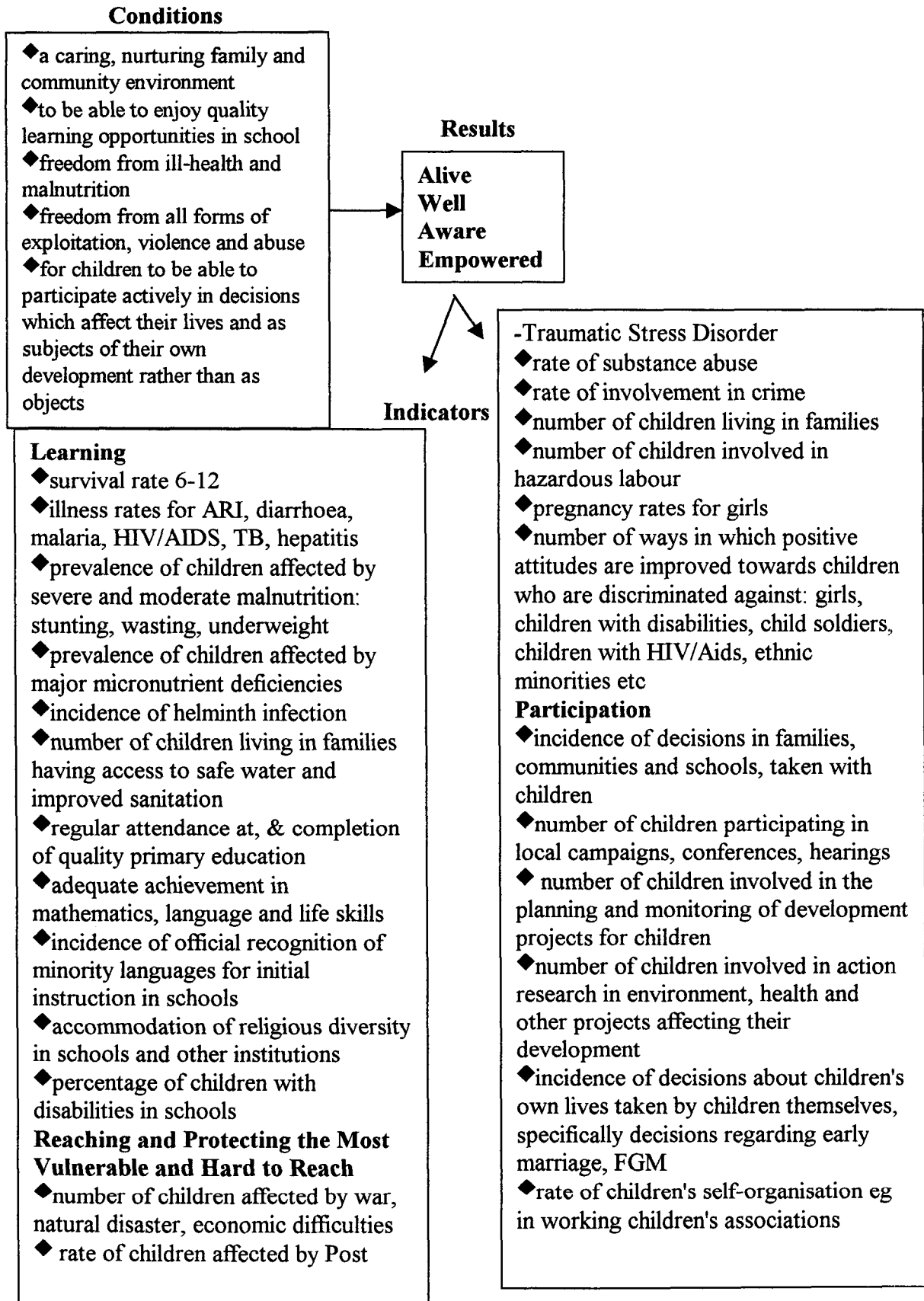


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TOR task 2. Recommend results for children / specific priority areas for the future Global Agenda for children, provide key justifications and linkages with WSC, other international conferences and DAC priorities, identify major partners and define their role

Part Two: Key Results for Children in Middle Childhood

In consideration of CRC and CEDAW, and in line with WSC goals, enabling conditions, key results and their indicators can be identified:



Priority Areas for the future Global Agenda for Middle Childhood

The priorities for Middle Childhood within a future global Agenda should work at completing the unfinished World Summit for Children's Agenda particularly with regard to access to quality health and education, water and sanitation, and nutrition, while **ensuring even more attention** to addressing the underlying causes of discrimination with regard to gender, ethnicity, disability, conflicts, class, caste and other forms of discrimination. Of all of the possible areas for work in achieving key results for children, **three priority areas** have been chosen:

- **getting children into school and keeping them there**

because

Learning is a key goal for middle childhood and the primary school is the central institutional means for ensuring this. Schools are also a delivery mechanism for a range of essential services, an important source of protection, and a natural space for children's participation. Children can benefit from even one year of schooling, but need to spend at least five years in school for quality benefits to begin to accrue.

- **reaching and protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach**

because

Global goals for children have hitherto failed to address the bottom 20 per cent - **the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach**. This group remains the major unmet challenge of the global agenda for children.

- **increasing children's participation in meaningful and practical ways**

because

Of all the rights, children's **participation** rights hold the key to self-protection, whilst being at the same time an area of controversy where there is little in the way of practice or tested models for programming.

These three key challenges need to be secured in a healthy and safe environment.

Major Partners and Their Roles

Related to the three priorities for Middle Childhood, UNICEF needs to seek partners who can help us to expand knowledge about children in this age group (academic institutions, middle childhood researchers), to build consensus for a life cycle approach to working with children, in the context of UNDAF, and to build capacity for planning and implementation for children in Middle Childhood. In the context of UNDAF, and with programme activities, UNICEF will work closely with the multilateral development banks, WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNCHS/Habitat, ILO, WFP, bilateral donors, and international and local civil society organizations. UNICEF will strengthen its links with governments and civil society organisations, the private sector, and local government structures.

Section Three: UNICEF Targets

Short-term targets by 2005

1. Programme Cooperation

Getting children into school and keeping them there

- Increase in the number of countries with comprehensive and multi-sectoral family and child development policies (with increased budgets to support them) by 50% of the year 2000 total.
- Increased enrolment in ECCD programmes by 50% of the year 2000 total.
- Increase net enrolment and completion in primary education (or equivalent programmes, especially for children who are vulnerable or hard to reach) by 50% of the year 2000 total.
- Eliminate gender disparities in enrolment and completion by 50% of the year 2000 total.
- Increase access to primary school for children with disabilities by at least 10% on 1998 figures
- Increase quality of primary education by ensuring improved content and processes for all students with regard to language access, including for children with disabilities, gender inclusiveness and behaviour change for healthy living.
- Enhance learning achievement in primary education by:
 - definition of desired learning outcomes for basic education by 50% total of countries at the year 2000
 - increase in percentage of children who achieve learning outcomes
 - decrease in gender disparities in learning achievement
 - improving teaching quality
- All children entering Grade one must be fully immunized against common childhood diseases including measles and polio.
- Increase by 50% the number of schools with water and sanitation facilities on year 2000 level

Reaching and protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach

- All countries to establish national plans of action for the elimination of FGM and other harmful traditional practices, including early marriage.
- Global Eradication of Poliomyelitis
- All countries in malaria endemic areas to be implementing malaria control programmes as recommended by the international community.
- Reduce prevalence of severe malnutrition by 30% of year 2000 level
- Reduction in the prevalence of moderate stunting by 30% of year 2000 level
- Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences including blindness
- Elimination of IDD to reduce physical stunting and mental disability caused by this deficiency
- Reduction in iron deficiency anaemia by one-third of 2000 level
- Increase access to sanitary means for excreta disposal by 10% of year 2000 level

- Increase access to safe water by 10% of year 2000 level
- Elimination of Guinea Worm Disease
- Smoking to be banned in all public places by the year 2000.

Increasing children's participation in meaningful and practical ways

- Reduction in the practice of early marriage without consultation with the girls
- Increased consultation with children through international conferences
- Increased involvement of children in need of special protection in planning and monitoring projects which affect their lives
- Increased involvement of children in the protection of the environment
- Increased involvement of children in decisions affecting their education and their health

2 Advocacy and Monitoring

Getting children into school and keeping them there

- Successful advocacy for a range of approaches to provision of basic education within a unified system
- Improved monitoring and assessment of education
- National policies ensured on the provision of safe water supply and sanitary facilities in all primary schools

Reaching and protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach

[children in emergencies, minority and indigenous children, children who are internally displaced or refugees, working children, children with disabilities, and girls]

- Policies and legislation supported which guarantee girls equal right to succession and inheritance
- Development of government policies supported related to equality of access for indigenous and ethnic minority children to all basic services
- Protection mechanisms are developed and access to basic social services supplied for refugee and internally displaced children
- Policies advocated enforcing minimum age for consent and marriage and raising this minimum age where necessary
- Disaggregation of data ensured (for health, education, etc.) by sex, age, ethnicity and locality, in all countries
- Ratification and monitoring advocated for the implementation of the Ottawa Convention on Elimination of Landmines in all countries, modelled on CRC process
- Increased resource allocation to basic social services in poor urban areas (in proportion to unserved urban population) and in remote rural areas.
- Costed and time bound national plans of action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour secured, and fully integrated within existing National Programmes of Action for Children in 50+ countries,
- Policy and legislation secured for elimination of the leaded products that are most threatening to child health and development (leaded gasoline, paint and water pipes)

- Policy and legislation secured to prevent child abuse
- Policy and legislation secured to prevent substance abuse by all children
- Policy and legislation secured for banning the recruitment of children as soldiers in all countries
- Policy and legislation secured for elimination of commercial sexual abuse and exploitation of children in all countries
- Increased awareness and advocacy for the reduction of gender disparities in food allocation and health care

Increasing children's participation in meaningful and practical ways

- Increased awareness of the importance of children's participation in decisions affecting their lives, within families and within communities

By 2010

1. Programme Cooperation

Getting children into school and keeping them there

- Increase in the number of countries with comprehensive and multi-sectoral family and child development policies (with increased budgets to support them) by 20% of the year 2005 total.
- Increased enrolment in ECCD programmes by 20% of the year 2005 total.
- Increase net enrolment and completion in primary education (or equivalent programmes, especially for children who are vulnerable or hard to reach) by 20% of the year 2005 total
- Eliminate gender disparities in enrolment and completion by 20% of the year 2005 total.
- Strengthening and enriching the learning environments for children : in families, communities, schools and workplaces
- Increase quality of primary education by ensuring improved content and processes for all students with regard to language access, including for children with disabilities, gender inclusiveness and behaviour change for healthy living.
- Enhance learning achievement in basic education by:
 - definition in all countries of desired learning outcomes in basic education
 - increase in percentage of children who achieve these learning outcomes
 - elimination of gender disparities in learning achievement
- Improving indicators, data collection, and monitoring systems to assess educational performance.
- Hygiene and environmental awareness components in all national primary education curricula
- Increase access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools by 25% of year 2005 levels
- Increase access to schools for children with disabilities by 25% of year 2005 level
- Full immunization of all children entering Grade one against common childhood diseases including Hepatitis B, and Yellow Fever in affected countries

Reaching and protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach

- Eliminate all forms of harmful traditional practices such as FGM, early marriage,
- 50% of all children in malaria endemic countries are protected by sleeping in a treated mosquito net
- Provision of effective and accessible School health services and/or Youth friendly Health services in all communities.
- Virtual elimination of severe malnutrition
- Reduction in the prevalence of stunting by 50% of year 2000 level
- Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences including blindness (sustaining 2005 target)
- Elimination of IDD (sustaining 2000 target)
- Reduction in iron deficiency anaemia by two-thirds of year 2000 level
- Increase access to a sanitary means for excreta disposal by 10% on year 2005 level
- Universal access to safe water source

Increasing children's participation in meaningful and practical ways

- All major international conferences involve participation of children

2. Advocacy and monitoring

Getting children into school and keeping them there

As for 2005

Reaching and protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach

- Policy, legislative, administrative and educational measures secured to protect the girl-child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse
- Costed and time bound national plans of action to eliminate all forms of exploitative child labour secured and fully integrated within existing National Programmes of Action for Children in 100+ countries,
- Adoption of the Optional Protocol on raising the age limit for recruitment of children as soldiers.

Increasing children's participation in meaningful and practical ways

- as for 2005
- Consultation with disabled children and /or the parents/ caregivers when planning programmes which involve them.

Major Supported Activities and Programme cooperation

Examples have been provided in this section, which is by no means exhaustive.

What this will mean in reality:

- **getting all children into school and keeping them there**

<p>Increase in the number of countries with comprehensive and multi-sectoral family and child development policies (with increased budgets to support them) by 50% of the year 2000 total.</p>	<p>This means: ensuring sufficient resources in families, ensuring good health and nutrition without discrimination, ensuring safe and healthy school and home environments with adequate resources including water and sanitation</p>
<p>Eliminate gender disparities in enrolment and completion by 50% of the year 2000 total.</p>	<p>-Teachers teaching in ways that enhance girls' learning, communities developing strategies to keep girls in school, developing gender-equitable learning environments in all schools, ensuring that laws punishing male teachers and male pupils for sexual harassment of girls are enforced, ensuring curriculum is gender inclusive, finding creative solutions for ensuring girl-friendly schools</p>
<p>Enhance learning achievement in primary education by: -definition of desired learning outcomes for basic education by 50% total of countries at the year 2000 -increase in percentage of children who achieve learning outcomes -decrease in gender disparities in learning achievement -improved teaching quality</p>	<p>-ensuring that curriculum outcomes are decided at the time of curriculum development, and with a broad range of stakeholders, for purposeful learning and assessment, training teachers to be successful documenters of children's learning -ensuring teacher can assess learning achievement in the context of the classroom activities and can describe it in adequate ways to parents and systems for pupils' benefits -giving teachers capacity to innovate, have adequate salaries, and supportive training</p>
<p>Increase net enrolment and completion in primary education (or equivalent programmes, especially for children who are vulnerable or hard to reach) by 50% of the year 2000 total.</p>	<p>-understanding and responding to the issues of second and third language learning in classrooms, and ensuring the appropriateness of textbooks so they are relevant to the lives and experiences of students, while providing links to a wider world. promoting diversified opportunities for learning which allow children to practice and promote language and culture</p>

Increase quality of primary education by ensuring improved content and processes for all students with regard to language access, including for children with disabilities, gender inclusiveness and behaviour change for healthy living.	-ensuring that the ways in which the school is managed and in which interactions occur, demonstrates and encourages healthy and life-supportive practices and attitudes, ensuring resources for sport and recreation and time to play at home and at school
Increase access to primary school for children with disabilities by at least 10% on 1998 figures	-training of teachers, parental involvement and special accessible classrooms for needed individualized attention -facilitating special education through development of curriculum using Braille, sign and audio tapes for communication needs of children with disabilities

- **reaching and protecting the most vulnerable and hard to reach: who are they, what will be done? These are children in emergencies, minority and indigenous children, children who are internally displaced or refugees, working children, children with disabilities, child soldiers and specifically, girls.**

Costed and time bound national plans of action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour secured, and fully integrated within existing National Programmes of Action for Children in 50+ countries Policy and legislation secured to prevent child abuse Policy and legislation secured for banning the recruitment of children as soldiers in all countries	This means: -enforcement of legislation limiting child labour, sexual exploitation and recruitment of child soldiers, -improving quality access to primary education, -advocacy and support of children's rights in families and communities and with employers, as well as nationally, -providing economic support to poor families.
Increased resource allocation to basic social services in poor urban areas (in proportion to unserved urban population) and in remote rural areas.	-ensuring legislation for basic social services in formal urban areas, -strengthening CBOs for community development projects
Increase quality of primary education by ensuring improved content and processes for all students with regard to language access, including for children with disabilities, gender inclusiveness and behaviour change for healthy living.	-making schools accessible to children through mobile teachers, multigrade schools, use of mother tongue languages, alternative teaching materials for children with special educational needs, building schools where children are: at work, in refugee camps, in homes. Making school schedules flexible so that children can attend.

<p>Reduce prevalence of severe malnutrition by 30% of year 2000 level</p> <p>Reduction in the prevalence of moderate stunting by 30% of year 2000 level</p> <p>Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences including blindness</p> <p>Elimination of IDD to reduce physical stunting and mental disability caused by this deficiency</p> <p>Reduction in iron deficiency anaemia by one-third of 2000 level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -create awareness about the extent, causes and consequences of malnutrition in middle childhood and the right of the child to good nutrition. -support development of national plans of action, policies and legislation to improve nutrition and health -promote good nutrition and health practices through formal and informal channels -further expand and sustain current efforts towards universal salt iodization and vitamin A and iron supplementation. -design and implement innovative community-based approaches to address malnutrition, including the provision of micronutrient supplements and regular deworming, in areas where malnutrition rates are especially high. -support generation and dissemination of information on key indicators of nutrition status during middle childhood for monitoring of global targets. -facilitating sustainable community-based rehabilitation services. -enhancing the ability of parents and caregivers to identify the signs of disability and seek early treatment and demand appropriate services. -creating an enabling social environment for children with disabilities, with special focus on reducing gender based negative attitudes and stigma.
<p>Policy and legislation secured for banning the recruitment of children as soldiers in all countries</p> <p>Policy and legislation secured for elimination of commercial sexual abuse and exploitation of children in all countries</p> <p>Development of government policies supported related to equality of access for indigenous and ethnic minority children to all basic services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -advocacy for elimination of discrimination, provision of education and creation of awareness for children's rights, protection and special needs in communities -providing protection to especially vulnerable children such as those affected by armed conflict, landmines, emergencies, AIDS (orphans), as well as ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples and promoting their positive development and participation in society

<p>Ratification and monitoring advocated for the implementation of the Ottawa Convention on Elimination of Landmines in all countries, modelled on CRC process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -developing and disseminating mine awareness education programmes, and first aid knowledge through national media, community, schools and family-based initiatives. -providing prosthetics and other physical and psychosocial rehabilitation for mobility and reintegration of children in communities -providing access to schools and recreation
<p>All countries to establish national plans of action for the elimination of FGM and other harmful traditional practices, including early marriage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -supporting NGOs and CBOs in efforts to change negative attitudes and practices towards girls; development of educational materials to sensitize and inform adults about the harmful effects of some traditional practices

increasing children's participation in meaningful and practical ways

<p>Increased involvement of children in need of special protection in planning and monitoring projects which affect their lives</p> <p>Increased involvement of children in the protection of the environment</p> <p>Increased involvement of children in decisions affecting their education and their health</p> <p>Increased awareness of the importance of children's participation especially to participation, and then ensuring that participation in decisions that affect their lives</p> <p>Reduction in the practice of early marriage without consultation with the girls themselves</p> <p>Increased consultation with children through international conferences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -International conferences organized with children's participation -Projects designed <i>with</i> children needing special protection, not just for children (e.g., displaced/refugee children) -Environmental protection projects designed with children -Children participating in UNICEF's programme process -Advocacy for children's real participation in decisions which affect their lives -Training of partners, networking and knowledge dissemination of participation as an objective, done with partners -Provision of training on children's participation to teachers and school administrators -Establishment of school committees involving children -Development of conflict resolution groups in which children participate -Training of children on their rights as outlined in the CRC and CEDAW, including voting by children on child rights -increasing awareness, understanding and acceptance of child participation as a right in home, school, community and social institutions through education and advocacy
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