



unicef
for every child



CHILD PROTECTION STRATEGY

2021-2030



Click on section bars to navigate publication

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The UNICEF Child Protection Strategy was produced by a core team at UNICEF under the leadership of Sumaira Chowdhury and Cornelius Williams. The team was comprised of Child Protection staff at Headquarters and colleagues working in Child Protection from the seven UNICEF regions. Peter Colenso supported the team with drafting.

Special thanks go to Regional Child Protection Advisers who gave their individual expertise and also marshalled inputs from their regions: Javier Aguilar, Jean Francois Basse, Andy Brooks, Aaron Greenberg, Amanda Bissex, Kendra Gregson, Rachel Harvey and Jose Bergua. And to Team Leaders in Child Protection at Headquarters: Stephen Blight, Kirsten Di Martino, Tasha Gill and Nankali Maksud. Numerous UNICEF colleagues provided extensive and high-quality background inputs into the Strategy, notably Joseph Banda, Jasmina Byrne, Eri Dwivedi, Claudia Cappa and Ramya Subrahmanian, but also more generally the Child Protection team in Programme Division. Thanks also to all those from various other teams who helped produced numerous background papers.

The Strategy was expertly guided by an Independent Reference Group (IRG) comprised of UNICEF Senior Managers. We are extremely grateful to the members of the IRG and their teams who gave their time and considerable

expertise: Obia Achieng, Segolene Adam, Henriette Ahrens, Ted Chaiban, Vidhya Ganesh, Mark Hereward, Rob Jenkins, Afshan Khan, Andrew Mawson, Bo Viktor Nylund, Luwei Pearson, Benjamin Perks, Vincent Petit, Marie-Pierre Poirier, Ron Pouwels, Lauren Rumble, Christian Skoog, Natalia Winder-Rossi and Alex Yuster. A very special thank you to Sanjay Wijesekera (IRG Chair) for his overall guidance as Director of UNICEF's Programme Division and to Omar Abdi for his unswerving support.

We wish to thank the 404 respondents – both UNICEF staff and external partners – who responded to the initial survey that informed the direction of the Strategy. We are particularly grateful to the 852 people in 26 countries in all seven UNICEF regions who provided their input into the formal consultation process for the Strategy – this in spite of the constraints of COVID-19, both logistical and in terms of the extra demands on people's time.

A very big thank you to the Government of Sweden, and in particular Charlotte Ståhl from Sida, for convening donor inputs into the Strategy; the donors themselves are too numerous to name, but we thank each and every one of you for the rich set of comments provided. Equally to the 'Joining Forces' group of child-focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who provided thoughtful verbal and written comments through the process: Child Fund Alliance, Plan International,

Save the Children, SOS Children Villages, Terre des Hommes and World Vision International. We are extremely grateful for inputs from leading child protection experts across the world who gave up their time to be interviewed for this Strategy and to provide written comments on successive drafts. These include: Sheridan Bartlett, Nigel Cantwell, Julia Fozzi, Philip Goldman, Philip Jaffé, Mary John, Shiva Kumar, Santi Kusumaningrum, Kunzang Lhamu, Benyam Mezmur, Alejandro Morlachetti, Dorothy Rozga, Howard Taylor, Jo Boyden, Alexander Krueger, and Joachim Theis. Thanks also to our sister UN agencies for the inputs they provided, including Gabrielle Henderson at UN Women; Grainne O'Hara at UNHCR; Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Violence Against Children; Tonderai Chikuwa, Chief of Staff, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; and Virginia Gamba de Potgieter, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

With the incredible engagement we have had throughout the Strategy development process, it is not possible to list the name of every person who contributed inputs and feedback. So a big thank you goes to all our colleagues in UNICEF and our external partners for so generously giving their time and expertise throughout the process. The Strategy is significantly richer as a result.



CONTENTS

FOREWORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.....	3
ACRONYMS.....	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	6
1 Background.....	8
2 Context.....	10
Global context for children to 2030.....	10
Child Protection context for children.....	13
UNICEF and Child Protection to date.....	15
UNICEF and Child Protection – looking forward.....	17
Conceptual Framework.....	19
3 Strategic Framework.....	20
4 Vision and Goals.....	21
5 Objectives.....	22
6 Programming Strategies.....	23
Behavioural, Social, Cultural And Economic Determinants: to effectively address the behavioural, social, cultural and economic determinants of child protection violations at scale.....	23
Child Protection Systems: to support inclusive and effective child protection systems in preventing and responding to child protection violations.....	26

Humanitarian: To effectively prevent and respond to child protection violations in humanitarian situations, including addressing determinants of violations and strengthening child protection systems.....	29
7 Programming Approaches.....	34
Strengthen data and research generation and use.....	34
Advocate for national legislation, policies, budgets and accountability.....	35
Build capacity for scaled-up child protection prevention and service delivery across sectors.....	35
Strengthen the engagement of communities, caregivers, children and adolescents.....	35
Develop partnerships for coordinated global and national action.....	36
8 Thematic Priorities.....	38
9 Core Inputs.....	47
Financial Resources.....	47
Human Resources.....	47
Performance and Impact Monitoring.....	48
10 Risks and Risk Management.....	49
A Annexes.....	51
E Endnotes.....	54

FOREWORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Violence against children happens in every country in the world. It can be physical, psychological or sexual. It can happen online or in the streets — in neighbourhoods, schools and homes.

For girls and women, disabled children and children living through conflicts or natural disasters, the threat is greater still.


And for all children, the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically intensified these risks, while simultaneously disrupting the services and support systems intended to protect them.

At UNICEF, we believe that every child has the right to grow up free from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices. That is why child protection is a cornerstone of our work.

Across more than 150 countries, we work with governments, businesses, civil society organizations and other partners to prevent violence against children and support survivors, including with mental health and psychosocial counselling. We also work with communities to end harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

Our work spans both decades of a child's early life, from birth to adolescence, in development and humanitarian contexts alike.

The progress outlined in this Strategy demonstrates how far the world has come in recent years in protecting children on a number of fronts — with welcome increases in birth registration and reductions in child labour, child marriage and female genital mutilation.



There is limited and shrinking space for the effective participation of NGOs, civil society and community representatives; and yet they are all critical for child protection.

(BULGARIA COUNTRY CONSULTATION)



But as we celebrate these achievements, we are clear-eyed about the challenges ahead. The impact of COVID-19 is likely to put our hard-won gains at risk.

The evidence presented in this Strategy reminds us that too many children are still living their lives without the systematic protection they need and deserve. We are already predicting sharp rises in the number of child marriages, girls subjected to female genital mutilation and children drawn into child labour, to name just a few examples.

We must not accept this.

This Strategy provides a vision and strategic framework to meet this challenge. It calls upon every sector of society — not just governments — to work together and invest together to prevent violence against children.

This includes scaling-up preventative and responsive health-care services, violence prevention and case detection, and mental health services, all delivered at the community level.

It includes ensuring universal access to safe schools — especially as education systems begin to re-open following the COVID-19 pandemic.

And it includes putting child protection at the heart of economic plans and priorities as countries continue to fight poverty within their borders and rebuild systems shattered by the pandemic.

But our work must also be about changing minds in our families, homes and communities. Progress on violence depends on making some fundamental changes in social norms, attitudes and behaviours, particularly towards girls and women.



We can no longer accept a world in which violence is a reality for millions of children and women, keeping them from the safety — and the opportunities to grow, learn and thrive — that every child deserves.

Protecting children from harm is not only the moral minimum for any society — it represents the only path to a better, safer and healthier future for children, and for our world.

Join UNICEF, our global partners and children around the world as we translate this Strategy into investments, programmes and solutions for children everywhere.

Let's put protection within reach of every child.

Handwritten signature of Henrietta Fore

Henrietta Fore, Executive Director

ACRONYMS

AI	artificial intelligence
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CCCs	Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPIMS	Child Protection Information Management Systems
CPSS	Child Protection System Strengthening
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
EAPR	East Asia and Pacific Region
ECAR	Europe and Central Asia Region
ESAR	Eastern and Southern Africa Region
FGM	female genital mutilation
GBViE	Gender Based Violence in Emergencies
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LACR	Latin America and Caribbean Region
LGBTQI+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex

MENAR	Middle East and North Africa Region
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PF4C	Public Financing for Children
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SAR	South Asia Region
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSW	Social Service Workforce
UN	United Nations
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WCAR	West and Central Africa Region
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child Protection is the prevention of, and response to, exploitation, abuse, neglect, harmful practices and violence against children. It is embedded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals. Child Protection is universal: it is for all children everywhere, from low- to high-income countries.

Over 1 billion children experience violence every year. The consequences of Child Protection violations are catastrophic – profound, enduring and often deadly for children – and with economic costs of

violence against children estimated at \$7 trillion per year. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified risks for children and reduced services to manage those risks.

But there have also been significant and positive changes in child protection in recent years. Government- and community-led actions have resulted in increases in birth registration and reductions in child labour, child marriage and female genital mutilation. Above all, we have learnt that child protection violations are preventable: progress can be made through political will, societal change and an emerging science of prevention and treatment strategies.

The purpose of this Strategy is to provide a clear vision and strategic framework for UNICEF's work in Child Protection for the decade to 2030, while allowing flexibility for this work to be led by country and regional contexts and local needs. The vision of this Strategy – centred in the Convention on the Rights of the Child – is a world where all children are free from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices. The goals of the Strategy are taken primarily



from the Sustainable Development Goals for child protection.

The primary focus of this Strategy is prevention. Our ambition is to scale up evidence-based prevention approaches to the population level – not only in the core Child Protection sectors of Social Welfare and Justice, but also in Education, Health, Social Protection and other sectors with strong and clear accountabilities to deliver child protection outcomes. This includes universal access to justice, to family and parenting support, to safe schools and to safety online, as well as universal adoption of transformative norms and values.

The primary focus of this Strategy is prevention. Our ambition is to scale up evidence-based prevention approaches to the population level ...



In addition to our core focus on universal prevention, UNICEF will ensure that no child is left behind: we will work with partners to target interventions on children at greatest risk of child protection violations. These include children in humanitarian/crisis settings, children with disabilities, children deprived of parental care, and children experiencing other forms of discrimination and exclusion. Where children are experiencing violations, UNICEF will work with partners to strengthen access to response services to prevent recurrence and provide care, support and justice.

In support of these objectives, the Strategy adopts three core interlinking programming strategies:

- 1 To effectively address the behavioural, social, cultural and economic determinants of child protection violations at scale
- 2 To support inclusive and effective child protection systems in preventing and responding to child protection violations
- 3 To effectively prevent and respond to child protection violations in humanitarian situations.

BACKGROUND

Child Protection is the prevention of, and response to, exploitation, abuse, neglect, harmful practices and violence against children. It is embedded in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**¹ – the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history² – and in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The need for Child Protection is universal: it is for all children everywhere, from low- to high-income countries, in all regions and settings. The consequences of Child Protection violations are **catastrophic**: profound, enduring and often deadly; with the economic costs of violence against children estimated at \$7 trillion per year.³ But this harm is **preventable**; progress can be made through political will for the fulfilment of children’s rights, societal change, and an emerging science of prevention and response strategies.

There have been **significant positive changes** in the field of Child Protection since the 2008 UNICEF Child Protection Strategy. Government- and community-led actions have resulted in increases in

birth registration and reductions in child labour, child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) over the last decade. Child Protection features prominently in the **SDGs**. There are new **partnerships** (e.g., the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children), new **standards** (e.g., the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action), new **programmatic frameworks** (e.g., INSPIRE) and new **evidence** of what works – particularly with respect to scalable strategies to prevent and respond to human rights violations such as violence against children and child marriage.

Despite these advances, over **1 billion children** still experience violence every year,⁴ and children face significant new challenges over the next decade such as rapid digital acceleration, increasing urbanization, climate change, protracted armed conflicts and increasing migration. These challenges present new risks to child protection. The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified risks for children and disrupted services to manage those risks.



UNICEF adopts a **human rights-based approach** to Child Protection.⁵ Our vision is to further the realization of all children’s rights, including their rights to be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and harmful practices; and for all children to access quality, effective and appropriate preventive support, redress and remedy. UNICEF is guided by human rights principles, norms and standards contained in the key human rights treaties that underpin all of its work, including the **CRC**, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

Women (**CEDAW**) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (**CRPD**). UNICEF supports Child Protection systems by strengthening the capacities of both governments, as well as civil society organizations and other non-State actors, as duty bearers and of right holders including children themselves and their families and communities.

In **humanitarian settings** in particular, UNICEF is guided by its Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs), the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming⁶ and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action.⁷ In situations of **armed conflict**, UNICEF is guided by international humanitarian law and refugee law and is specifically mandated by Security Council Resolution 1612.⁸

The purpose of this Strategy is to provide a clear **vision and strategic framework** for UNICEF's work in Child Protection for the decade to 2030, while allowing flexibility for this work to be led by country and

regional context and local needs. The **goals** of the Strategy are primarily taken from the **SDGs for Child Protection** which partner governments and others have adopted. The adoption of the SDGs in 2015 has challenged the child protection sector to focus more strongly on prevention: Target 16.2 commits the international community to "end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children" and target 5.2 to "eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls". Other targets address underlying causes of child protection violations in the areas of poverty, health, gender equality, education, safe environments and justice.

With less than 10 years left in the Decade of Action to 2030, important gaps remain in achieving child protection-related goals. There have also been set-backs as a result of the impacts of **COVID-19** and other factors. Remedial action alone will not achieve the elimination of violence, abuse, exploitation and other forms of violation of children's rights. There is therefore an urgent need to revisit our protection strategy to strengthen focus on **scaling up evidence-based preventative approaches** that are necessary to achieve the SDGs, with a strong focus on **equity**.

On this basis, the Strategy has three **Objectives**.

- 1 Universal Prevention:** All children grow up in a protective environment;
- 2 Leaving No One Behind:** Children living in situations of highest risk receive targeted support;
- 3 Response and Preventing Recurrence:** Children experiencing violations receive quality services.

To deliver these Objectives, the Strategy adopts three core interlinking **programming strategies**:

- 1** To effectively address the **behavioural, social, cultural and economic determinants** of child protection violations at scale
- 2** To support inclusive and effective child protection systems in preventing and responding to child protection violations
- 3** To effectively prevent and respond to child protection violations in **humanitarian** situations.

CONTEXT

Global context for children to 2030

The global **population** will grow from 7.7 billion in 2019 to around 8.5 billion in 2030.⁹ By the middle of the century, Africa will be home to 1 billion children, almost 40 per cent of the world's total.¹⁰ By 2030, **urban** areas will house 60 per cent of people globally.¹¹ **Migration** is increasing, with international migrants now comprising 3.5 per cent of the global population, up from 2.8 per cent in 2000,¹² and forced displacement¹³ has doubled in the last decade to comprise 1 per cent.¹⁴


At 2.9 per cent, global **economic growth** is the lowest it has been since the 2008-2009 world financial crisis.¹⁵ Economic recovery is threatened by rising geopolitical tensions and social unrest, worsening trade relations, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁶ There are 663 million children worldwide living in **poverty**, of whom 385 million are living in extreme poverty.¹⁷ Eighty-five per cent of the poorest children on the global Multidimensional Poverty Index live in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁸ Two out of three children



globally have no access to any form of child or family benefit, and coverage is lowest where child poverty is highest.¹⁹ The number of States graduating to middle-income status is increasing, as is the proportion of the world's child population in middle-income countries, yet middle-income countries are home to 75 per cent of the world's population and 62 per cent of the world's poor.²⁰

Nearly one fifth of children worldwide – 420 million children – live in **conflict-affected countries**, a rise of nearly 30 million from 2016.²¹ Armed actors conduct deliberate campaigns of violence against children – including targeting schools and enslaving girls and boys²² – and against women. Children living in economic and physical insecurity are at risk of child trafficking, sexual violence and recruitment by non-State armed groups and by armed forces. At the end of 2018, nearly 31 million children had been forcibly displaced worldwide.²³

Climate change affects women and children disproportionately. It is in the areas most impacted by climate change that women play a central role: food security, agriculture, energy, livelihoods and health. Climate change will have severe consequences for child rights



There is limited and shrinking space for the effective participation of NGOs, civil society and community representatives; and yet they are all critical for child protection.

(BULGARIA COUNTRY CONSULTATION)

through environmental degradation, forced migration, poverty, stress on public services and compounding household vulnerabilities – in turn impacting child protection.²⁴ And it will particularly affect marginalized and excluded groups, such as indigenous peoples. The increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters due to climate change will exacerbate these impacts.

The world is witnessing worrying trends of political and social **polarization**, along with decreasing trust in traditional institutions such as government and the media. Many countries are experiencing contractions of **democratic and civic space**, with children and young people taking centre stage through social movements demanding change. Between 2006 and 2019, the

human rights to freedom of association and organization declined in 43 countries while only improving in 16.²⁵ Protests around the world have exposed structural **racism** and **discrimination**, as well as xenophobia, including in justice and law enforcement systems. This pressure is challenging governments and partners to re-think their approaches and to build on transformative actions that can catalyse wider reforms for children.

We are living through a **4th Industrial Revolution**, with new threats to, and opportunities for, the realization of children's rights from emerging technologies such as biometrics, artificial intelligence (AI) and assisted reproductive technologies. Digital connectivity – largely driven, developed and owned by the private sector – brings risks from surveillance, data misuse, misinformation, grooming, online abuse and bullying as well as the perpetuation of social inequity through the digital divide. These are risks that the world is currently ill-equipped to manage. But, equally, the digital world is an opportunity, with the potential for children and young people to connect, socialize, express themselves, become empowered and be agents of change. AI-enabled technologies have the potential to improve children's access to services,

such as to education through personalized curricula platforms, to health through faster diagnostics and to targeted and more efficient child protection case management. Social media and digital communication tools can open up opportunities for wider engagement with parents, caregivers and communities.

Worldwide, 284 million people are suffering from anxiety and 264 million from depression,²⁶ and an estimated 10-20 per cent of children suffer from **mental health** issues.²⁷ Suicide is the third leading cause of death in 15–19-year-olds; adolescent girls are especially at risk of depression.²⁸ The experience of abuse, neglect and other adversities in childhood is a leading driver of poor mental health outcomes. In low- and middle-income countries, more than 75 per cent of people receive no treatment for their mental disorder,²⁹ and there is a particular lack of targeted, evidence-based programmes, workforce capacity and sustained funding for critical Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) for children and families. Countries on average spend less than 1 per cent of their health budgets on mental health.³⁰

Gender affects access to opportunities and services, may exacerbate lifetime inequalities and is a strong determinant of a child's experience of violence, influencing

both the type of violence suffered and why violence is inflicted. In a recent survey, 58 per cent of girls and young women reported being harassed and abused online, with one in four feeling physically unsafe as a result.³¹ In addition, compared to same-age heterosexual peers, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (**LGBTQI+**) children are at increased risk of interpersonal violence,³² including aggravated forms of bullying and harassment, particularly within the school environment. LGBTQI+ children are also at heightened risk of self-inflicted forms of violence, including suicide.³³

Violent deaths are becoming more common in **adolescence**: homicide accounts for two-thirds of violent adolescent deaths around the world, the highest rates of which are concentrated in Latin America and the Caribbean.³⁴ Globally, 1 in 5 young women are married before age 18 and 1 in 20 before age 15.³⁵ More than 40 per cent of adolescent girls aged 15–19 years in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa think a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances,³⁶ reflecting the social acceptability of intimate partner violence (IPV). Mental health issues constitute a major burden of disease for adolescents globally.

Global evidence suggests that **children with disabilities**³⁷ are at heightened risk of violence.³⁸ They are 3.7 times more likely than children without disabilities to be victims of any form of violence, 3.6 times more likely to be victims of physical violence and 2.9 times more likely to be victims of sexual violence.³⁹ Studies from low- to middle-income countries demonstrate that **women with disabilities** are 2-4 times more likely to experience IPV than their non-disabled peers.⁴⁰

While significant expansions in **school** enrolments over the last two decades have great potential to support child protection outcomes, an estimated 258 million children remain **out of school**⁴¹ and excluded from the protection, personal development and other related services offered within school environments. Over 90 per cent of students worldwide were affected by school closures as a result of COVID-19.⁴² Even children in school suffer violence. Globally, half of students aged 13–15 – some 150 million – report experiencing peer-to-peer violence in and around school.⁴³ Some 720 million school-aged children live in countries where they are not fully protected by law from corporal punishment at school.⁴⁴

COVID 19 has exposed long-standing, deep-seated, systemic human rights and child rights violations. It will likely continue

to exacerbate these pre-existing violations, as well as create new ones, especially for those who are already disadvantaged such as children from marginalized or minority groups, children without or at risk of losing parental care and children with disabilities. More than ever, fault lines have been exposed – between those who have access to health care, education, digital technology, water, sanitation, nutrition, information, economic and social protections and child protection services, and those who do not.

While the short-term implications of **COVID-19** for child protection are increasingly known⁴⁵ – increased violence, reduced services for prevention and response and major economic contractions and increased poverty – the medium- and long-term implications are unclear. What is clear, however, is that risk factors of harm are on the rise and protective factors are weakened as a result of COVID-19 containment measures. A recent review of evidence from previous pandemics and epidemics and their impact on child protection outcomes highlighted how disruptions to the care-giving environment, schooling, work and services can send women and children into a spiral of harm and violence, with heightened risks of child marriage and child labour.⁴⁶ Overall,



it is vital that the Child Protection sector be prepared for the next public health emergency, even while dealing with the ramifications of this one.

Child Protection context for children

The child protection-related **SDGs**, which are explicitly grounded in human rights, are mostly **off-track**, resulting in major child rights violations. For example:



SDG 5 (Gender Equality):

1 in 3 adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 worldwide have been the victims of emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by their husbands or partners at some

point in their lives,⁴⁷ and 15 million adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 have experienced forced sex⁴⁸ (5.2); an estimated 650 million girls and women today were married before their 18th birthday⁴⁹ (5.3); at least 200 million girls and women have been subjected to FGM⁵⁰ (5.3).



SDG 8 (Child Labour):

152 million children are in child labour globally, and almost 73 million children are performing hazardous work⁵¹ (8.7); in addition, many girls and boys are involved in work that is hidden within the home and in family enterprises – these children are not systematically counted in available statistics.



SDG 16 (Violence against Children; Access to Justice;

Legal Identity): the United Nations verified over 25,000 grave violations against children affected by armed conflict in 2019,⁵² more than half committed by non-State armed groups and a third by government and international armed forces (16.1); about half the

world's children below the age of 15 are subjected to physical discipline at home,⁵³ and roughly three in four children between the ages of 2 and 4 years are exposed to psychological aggression and corporal punishment on a regular basis⁵⁴ (16.2); in one third of countries, at least 5 per cent of young women reported experiences of sexual violence during childhood⁵⁵ (16.2); one in four children under age 5 (166 million), on average, are not registered in the world today and 237 million children under 5 do not have a birth certificate⁵⁶ (16.9).

At the same time, there has also been significant **progress** in some areas. There has been a rise in **birth registration** levels globally, with about three in four children under age 5 registered today, compared to six in ten in 2000.⁵⁷ In the 31 countries with available data, **FGM** has dropped by a quarter in the last 20 years.⁵⁸ **Child marriage** has also declined over the past decades (though not in all regions); today, one in five young women were married in childhood, compared to one in four a decade ago.⁵⁹ However, even in those areas where progress has been made,

a **rapid scale-up of evidence-based preventive interventions** will be required to avoid a reversal of gains and to meet the SDG targets by the end of the Strategy period. The world is not on track to achieve universal birth registration by 2030. Unless progress is accelerated, the total number of unregistered children in sub-Saharan Africa will continue to increase and will exceed 100 million by 2030 (see Figure 1).⁶⁰

Without further acceleration, over 120 million girls are likely to marry by 2030

(see Figure 2).⁶¹ However, in order to meet the target of elimination by 2030, global progress would need to be 17 times faster than the rate observed over the past decade for child marriage. Even in countries in which FGM has become less common, progress would need to be at least 10 times faster to eliminate it by 2030 (see Figure 3).⁶² In addition, there are areas such as the justice and care sectors where we are not even able to measure progress because data, including disaggregated data, are lacking.

FIGURE 1. Progress and projections on birth registration

Unless progress is accelerated, the total number of unregistered children in sub-Saharan Africa will continue to increase and will exceed 100 million by 2030

NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 WHOSE BIRTHS ARE NOT REGISTERED, OBSERVED AND PROJECTED, BY REGION

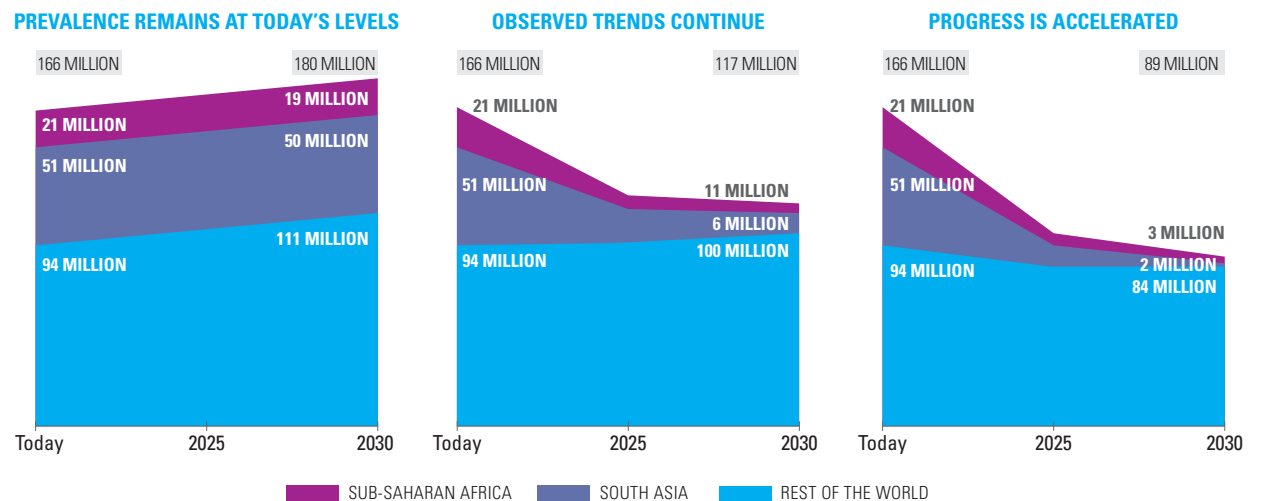


FIGURE 2. Progress and projections on Child Marriage

If trends continue, Latin America and the Caribbean will join sub-Saharan Africa among the regions with the highest global prevalence of child marriage by 2030

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AGED 20 TO 24 YEARS WHO WERE FIRST MARRIED OR IN UNION BEFORE AGE 18, PROJECTED, BY REGION

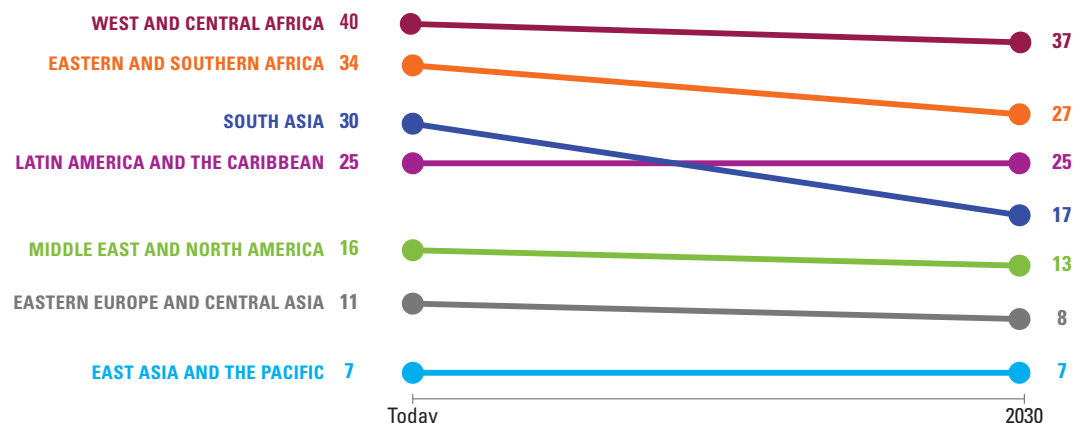
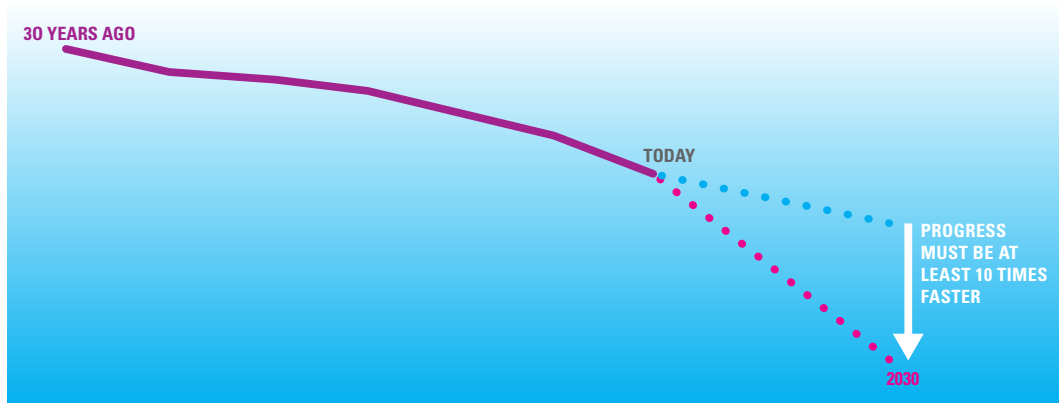


FIGURE 3. Progress and projections on female genital mutilation

Even in countries where the practice has become less common, progress would need to be at least 10 times faster to meet the global target of elimination by 2030

PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS AGED 15 TO 19 YEARS WHO HAVE UNDERGONE FGM IN COUNTRIES WITH A DECLINE IN PREVALENCE, OBSERVED, PROJECTED AND REQUIRED FOR ELIMINATION



The data are clear: linear progress is not enough to secure the rights of children and to achieve the SDGs.

UNICEF and Child Protection to date

The **CRC** and its Optional Protocols provides the basis for UNICEF’s work in child protection, together with CEDAW and the CRPD. UNICEF’s **human rights-based approach** means that its programming and advocacy are systematically guided by human rights standards and principles⁶³ and the four guiding principles of the CRC: the best interests of the child; non-discrimination; respect for the views of the child; and rights to life, survival and development. Specifically, UNICEF’s human rights-based approach encompasses the analysis of **child rights** violations, identifies the roles and capacities of duty bearers and rights holders and aims, while building their respective capacities to fulfil their human rights obligations and claim their rights, to redress discriminatory practices. Discriminatory practices include, but are not limited to, those based on **gender** (including children who identify themselves as non-binary), **race, ethnic and social origin** (e.g., minority and indigenous children); **disability and nationality or migration status**.

Guided by the 2008 Child Protection Strategy, there has been a clear shift to **systems strengthening**, including a clearer focus on strengthening the social service workforce in recent years. UNICEF works across the **humanitarian-development-peace nexus**. Strengthening child protection systems across all contexts also requires enhancing **coordination and collaboration between sectors** (particularly Social Welfare, Justice, Education, Health and Social Protection) to strengthen legal and policy frameworks and make quality services available for prevention and response.

UNICEF has a strong focus on **social and behavioural change**, including **transforming harmful gender and social norms and practices**. In this context, it recognizes and supports the participation of change agents, including through programmes that promote **gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion** (including of LGBTIQ+ populations), **child and adolescent empowerment**, as well as **community engagement** strategies at scale. Increasingly, UNICEF is recognizing the significance of the **business** world as both an arena for social change and a contributor to solutions for children.

It is also learning the importance of addressing the intergenerational cycle of violence. **Gender equality and women's empowerment** have a major influence on children's protection, with strongly evidenced links, for example, between violence against women – including IPV – and violence against children.⁶⁴ UNICEF has been a leader in the field of **gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE)**, delivering high-quality, innovative programming, leading multiple coordination mechanisms and playing a central role in developing all the seminal guidance of the GBViE sector. It has also invested in evidence-based prevention programming.

UNICEF embraces the vision of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and is fully committed to **UN Development System (UNDS) reform**, which promotes closer collaboration among UN agencies. Notably, UNICEF co-leads two of the largest joint programmes with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on ending child marriage and eliminating FGM. It also works with 14 UN agencies on legal identity, with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on child labour and with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNFPA, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the

International Organization for Migration (IOM) on mental health, psychosocial well-being and development, children on the move and violence against children, among others. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF works with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNHCR, UNFPA, WHO, IOM and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to lead the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AoR) and contributes to the Gender Based Violence (GBV) AoR, Mine Action AoR and the Reference Group on MHPSS in Emergency Settings. UNICEF also actively engages with the UN human rights mechanisms (treaty bodies including the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Procedures and the Universal Periodic Review) to support translating legal instruments into the realization of children's rights on the ground, and with regional UN bodies. It works with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as well as the Special Representatives of the UN Secretary General on Violence Against Children, Children in Armed Conflict and Sexual Violence in Conflict. Within and beyond the United Nations, UNICEF works through a range of additional **partnerships** with State and non-State actors.


UNICEF fosters **innovation** and supports coherent and centrally supported **information management systems** in line with data protection and privacy rights and principles to support case management, including through the inter-agency tool, Primero™. UNICEF uses **rights- and results-based management** to strengthen planning and monitoring and to boost transparency and accountability for results. UNICEF has invested significantly in strengthening both performance and situation monitoring across the Child Protection sector in recent years.

In 2020, UNICEF responded to 455 new and ongoing **humanitarian situations** in 152 countries, including supporting 17.8 million women, girls and boys with **gender-based violence** prevention, risk mitigation and response services; reached 4.2 million girls and boys who had experienced **violence** with health, social work and justice services; and supported 5.7 million girls with prevention and care interventions related to **child marriage**.

As much as **COVID-19** set back progress for the realization of children's rights, it also provided opportunities for increased Child Protection. UNICEF advocated for social service workforce members to be recognized

as 'essential workers' and capitalized on opportunities: to leverage digital technology to reach parents on caregiving and MHPSS messages; to facilitate children linking up with social workers; to expand coaching and supervision; to add a tier of teleservices with the potential to expand service provision post-COVID-19; to engage communities in new ways; and to ensure safety in online learning following unprecedented school closures. It also underscored the importance of the costing, affordability and financing agenda, particularly in the context of shrinking fiscal space and major economic contractions. Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GBViE expertise within the agency was instrumental in addressing the shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls far beyond the traditional humanitarian space.

Child Protection annual **expenditure** has remained just below 13 per cent of UNICEF's total expenditure for the last seven years (2014-2020), reaching \$712 million in 2020. The largest increases in expenditure have been: (i) thematically, to emergencies, violence against children and systems strengthening; and (ii) geographically, to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. As of the beginning of 2021, UNICEF had **894 full-time**



It is critical to strengthen child protection data and evidence generation. UNICEF has been a valued partner in generating country-specific evidence on prevalence of violence and knowledge, attitudes and practices on violence against children. This evidence has helped us in advocacy, in policy advice to the Government and in our work directly with communities.

(KAZAKHSTAN NGOS
COUNTRY CONSULTATION)

staff working in the area of Child Protection – its largest single workforce and the largest cadre of Child Protection specialists in any international agency. This figure as a share of UNICEF staff has remained constant in recent years at 18-19 per cent of specialist staff.

UNICEF and Child Protection – looking forward

The **process** of Strategy development has been led by a team comprising UNICEF Headquarters staff and Regional Child Protection Advisers, supported by an Internal Reference Group comprising UNICEF staff from different offices and functions. It has

been informed by three core inputs: (i) a **survey** on UNICEF's Child Protection work, completed by 404 participants, (ii) a series of **background papers**, including reviews of research and evaluations and (iii) extensive internal and external **consultations**, including 852 people in 26 countries in all 7 UNICEF regions inputting into the formal consultation process for the Strategy. Key findings from the **survey** and broader **consultations** include the following (see Annex 1 for more detail):

- There is support for UNICEF to adopt a 'public health approach' to child protection programming, i.e., (i) population-based, (ii) evidence-based and (iii) prevention first.
- UNICEF works best with governments, national civil society organizations and other UN agencies but less well with private sector companies;
- UNICEF's work is particularly critical in the areas of institutional strengthening of national child protection systems and in-service delivery in fragile and low-capacity contexts;



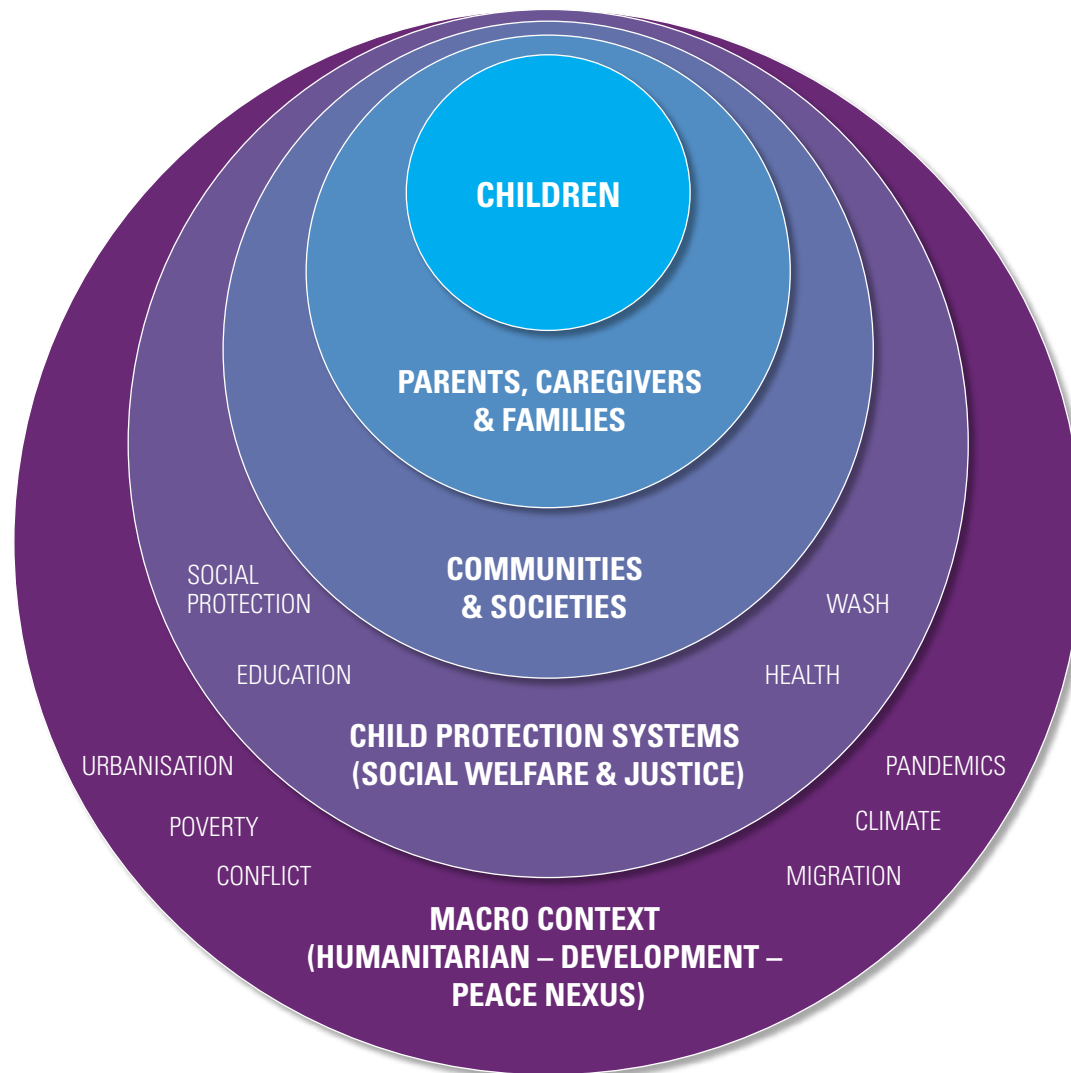
- Young people tell us they want a positive narrative focused on participation and empowerment;
- The survey showed strong support for UNICEF to do more on child online protection (67 per cent), children on the move (64 per cent) and ending detention of children (60 per cent);
- While 91 per cent of survey respondents agreed that UNICEF is an established global leader in Child Protection, only 24 per cent felt that it had enough staff to execute its work.


To address child protection, we must address multidimensional poverty, including working through other sectors such as Health and Education
 (EGYPT COUNTRY CONSULTATION)


Conceptual Framework

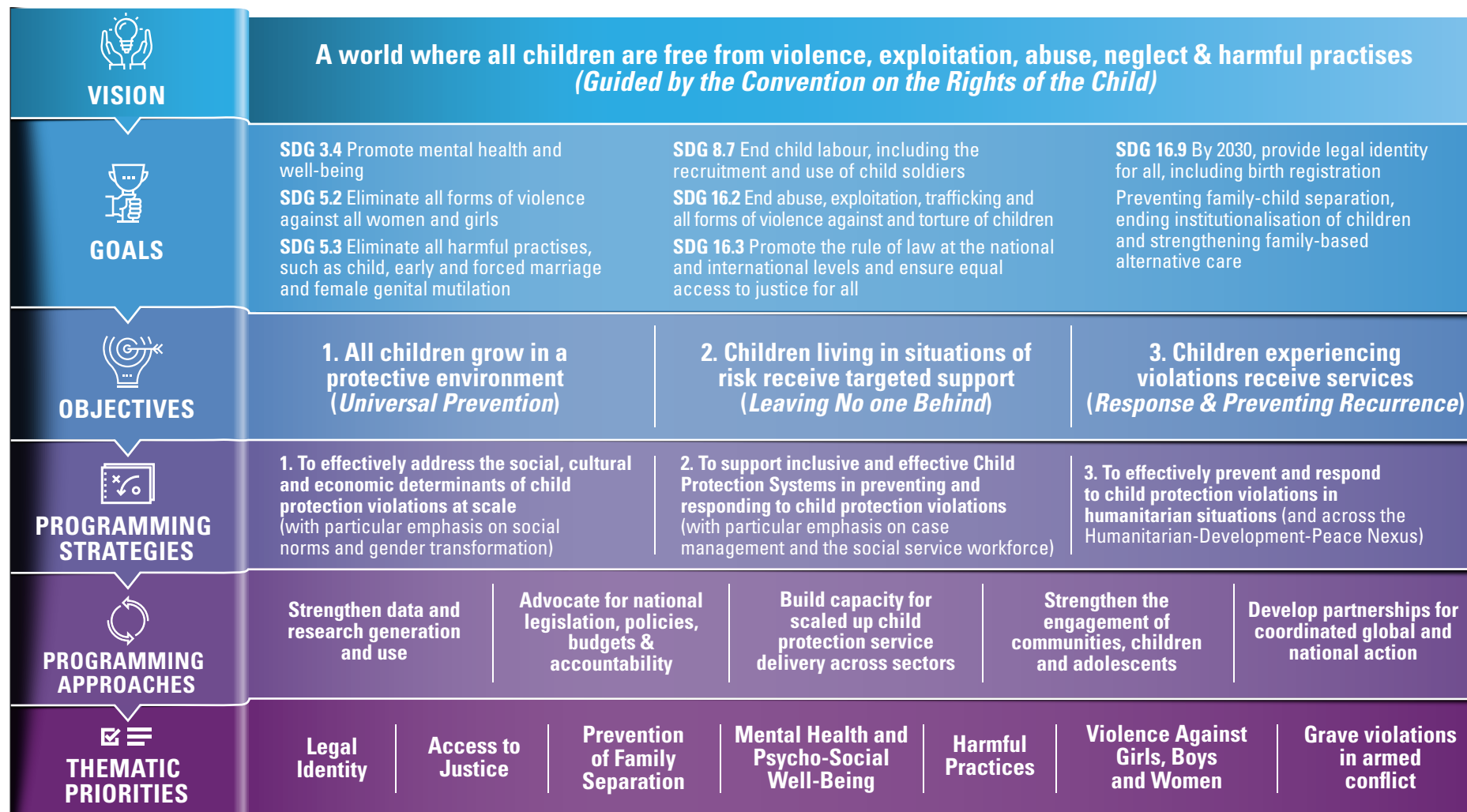
The **Conceptual Framework** for the Child Protection Strategy describes five concentric layers nested within each other, denoting that none of these layers exists in isolation – they are all inter-related. At the heart are **children**, supported by **parents, caregivers and families**, who in turn form part of broader **communities and societies**. The next layer influencing child protection outcomes is **child protection systems** (comprised of the Social Welfare and Justice sectors), supported by other sectors essential for child protection programming (e.g. Education, Health, Social Protection, WASH). These layers are in turn situated within the broader **macro national and trans-national context** (social, political, economic, security). UNICEF will work across all layers of the framework to address violations of child protection-related human rights at scale.

FIGURE 4. Conceptual Framework for the Child Protection Strategy



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

FIGURE 5. UNICEF Child Protection Strategic Framework



VISION AND GOALS

The **vision** of the UNICEF Child Protection Strategy is a world where all children are free from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices. It is a vision centred in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

(CEDAW) and allied to the concept of human security – a people-centred and multi-disciplinary understanding of security.

The **goals** of the Strategy are primarily taken from the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, indicating alignment to those global goals that partner governments have adopted, supplemented by one in an area not represented in the SDGs.⁶⁵ Table 1



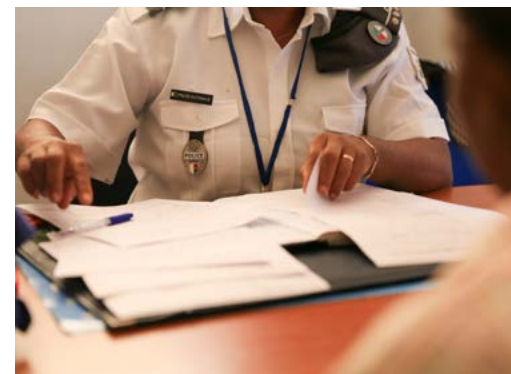
shows the correspondence between the SDGs for child protection and the relevant articles of the CRC.

TABLE 1. SDGs for child protection and the relevant articles of the CRC

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)	CRC ARTICLES
SDG 3.4 Promote mental health and well-being	Art. 6, art. 24.1, art. 24.2, art. 39
SDG 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls	Art.1, art. 19, art. 28.2, art. 34, art. 35, art. 36, art. 37(a), art. 38.4, art. 39
SDG 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	Art. 1, art. 24.3; Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (Articles 2[a], 3[1a(1)])
SDG 8.7 End child labour, including the recruitment and use of child soldiers	Art. 1, art. 19, art. 32, art. 34, art. 35, art. 36, art. 37(a), art. 38.2, art. 38.3, art. 39; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
SDG 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children	Art. 1, art. 6, art. 19, art. 21, art. 32, art. 34, art. 35, art. 36, art. 37(a), art. 39; Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
SDG 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all	Art 37, art.38.1, art.40
SDG 16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration (and SDG 17.19.2)	Art. 7, art. 8
Prevent and respond to unnecessary family-child separation, end institutionalization of children and strengthen family-based alternative care ⁶⁶	Articles 7, 9, 18, 20, 21 and 25

OBJECTIVES

The Strategy has three **Objectives**.



1 UNIVERSAL PREVENTION: All children grow up in a protective environment. UNICEF will support the scale up of prevention strategies and approaches to population level. These include universal access to birth registration, to family and parenting support, to access to justice, to safe schools and to safety online, as well as universal adoption of transformative norms and values. This also entails close collaboration with other sectors, such as Education, Health and Social Protection, to address other risk and protective factors outside of the Child Protection sector.

2 LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: Children living in situations of highest risk receive targeted support. UNICEF will focus on prevention and early interventions for children at greatest risk of child protection violations. These include children in humanitarian/crisis settings, on the move, with disabilities, from minority groups, deprived of parental care and experiencing other forms of discrimination and exclusion.

3 RESPONSE AND PREVENTING RECURRENCE: Children experiencing violations receive quality services. Where children are experiencing violations, UNICEF will strengthen access to response, as well as secondary and tertiary prevention services to prevent recurrence and provide care, support and justice.

PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES

To deliver these Objectives, the Strategy adopts three core inter-linked **Programming Strategies** centred in a human rights-based approach:

- 1 BEHAVIOURAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS:** to effectively address the behavioural, social, cultural and economic determinants of child protection violations at scale
- 2 CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS:** to support inclusive and effective child protection systems in preventing and responding to child protection violations
- 3 HUMANITARIAN:** to effectively prevent and respond to child protection violations in humanitarian situations.

Behavioural, Social, Cultural And Economic Determinants: to effectively address the behavioural, social, cultural and economic determinants of child protection violations at scale

1. Addressing the economic determinants of child protection violations

- Child protection violations are inextricably linked to broader structural issues that cannot be solved through child protection interventions alone. Economic hardship and poverty-related drivers are at the root of many child protection issues, including child labour, child marriage, unsafe child migration, violence against children, sexual exploitation, trafficking, family separation and under-18 offending. Moreover, these violations have been exacerbated by COVID-19,



which has depressed economic growth and placed considerable additional economic and other pressures on households – in particular, low-income households.

- UNICEF will seek to put Child Protection at the heart of **social and economic policy** and poverty reduction strategies. It will do so by working through its approach to **Public Financing for Children (PF4C)**; and through supporting governments and other partners to build and invest in child-sensitive⁶⁷ **social protection systems**, including cash transfers and integrated social protection schemes ('cash and care') for low-income and vulnerable households, including for children with disabilities. This

also includes linking these **social protection systems** to broader **child protection systems**, including the social service workforce. The 2019 evaluation of UNICEF's support to Child Protection Systems Strengthening showed that the best performing child protection systems were in countries where these were deliberately linked with functioning social protection systems. Social Protection and Child Protection systems have multiple interfaces –

PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CHILDREN (PF4C) WITHIN CHILD PROTECTION

PF4C analyses are essential to build the economic case for system strengthening and service delivery scale-up, and they are crucial to advocating for the budgets required to get these initiatives implemented. To support the uptake of PF4C, UNICEF has strengthened the capacity of Social Policy units, introduced internal staff training on PF4C and put in place a global long-term agreement to facilitate easier contracting with public financial management experts. Going forward, UNICEF will prioritize PF4C in child protection systems strengthening, coordinating with its wider efforts to create fiscal space for social services and focusing on five core actions: (i) making the economic case for child protection to increase its budget priority in line with States' CRC commitments; (ii) assisting with building national child protection systems, including the workforce and the scaling-up of quality services (including cross-sectoral investments in core preventive services such as education); (iii) supporting sub-national authorities responsible for child protection; (iv) improving the efficiency of child protection services; and (v) enabling and implementing the tracking of child protection budgets and expenditures.

including vulnerability assessments, case management and social welfare workforce strengthening – and their work is often led out of the same government ministry.

2. Promoting social change and addressing harmful social and gender norms

In line with the Conceptual Framework for Child Protection, UNICEF will adopt a range of strategies for reducing the negative social influences that families are exposed to and adopting and leveraging the positive ones. Across all contexts, a particular focus will be put on addressing harmful social and gender norms that create strong expectations to maintain the status quo, as well as the various compliance mechanisms also holding harmful practices in place (e.g., socialization processes, powerholders' influence, group sanctions). This also applies to humanitarian settings, including natural disasters or humanitarian crises triggered by the influx of refugees. UNICEF will engage **children, adolescents and youth, parents, caregivers and families, local leaders including religious leaders** and, more broadly, the **private sector, communities and societies** at large to promote protective behaviours and norms.

Our work for positive social change will cut across all areas of the Child Protection Strategy, from shifting prevalent beliefs and expectations on child justice at country and global levels to working towards more positive parenting and gender-equal roles, including gender-equitable masculinities. In line with the Conceptual Framework presented in Figure 4, the three paragraphs below describe priority actions for: children; parents, caregivers and families; and communities and societies.

CHILDREN: To strengthen the resources, resilience and voice of children and adolescents, UNICEF will:

- support life skills programmes that integrate attention to child protection-related human rights, gender norms, healthy relationships and violence prevention and provide positive role models for children;
- support school-based (e.g., 'Safe to Learn'⁶⁸) and community-based violence prevention programmes and collaborate with the health sector on issues such as teenage pregnancies and HIV/AIDS;

- implement social and behaviour change strategies to raise awareness, encourage self-efficacy and peer support and promote social and gender norms change;
- strengthen child and adolescent participatio⁶⁹, voice, empowerment and engagement with organizations and networks of young people, including organizations representing vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, people affected by migration and ethnic minorities;⁷⁰
- work to keep siblings together when in the best interest of the child.

PARENTS, CAREGIVERS and FAMILIES:

To support positive and protective parenting and caregiving and prevent family-child separation, UNICEF will use gender-transformative strategies that:

- empower mothers, fathers and other caregivers to adopt positive parenting approaches through community engagement and inclusive positive parenting support services as part of a broader approach to nurturing car⁷¹ through the life course;

- support inclusive and accessible social care and support services (e.g., home visits), particularly for vulnerable families;
- support equitable and inclusive cash transfer and integrated social protection schemes, especially those that address or evaluate the impact on girls' and women's empowerment and safe transitions to adulthood for girls and boys.

COMMUNITIES and SOCIETIES: To change harmful social and gender norms, strengthen community participation and positive social norms and promote early intervention and response, UNICEF will:

- prioritize standard setting and monitoring and oversight mechanisms to ensure quality, accountability and long-term sustainability of community engagement for child protection
- support community engagement strategies to address power imbalances and change harmful social norms around gender, violence, discrimination, disability and care, in particular through community-led deliberation, mobilization and action;

NGOs and community-based organizations are close to the ground and close to their communities; they can test new approaches, build local capacity, challenge harmful social norms and partner with UNICEF and with governments to execute child protection strategies at scale.

(HAITI COUNTRY CONSULTATION)

- engage with communities and community-based organizations to prevent and respond to violence and all forms of discrimination, including on the basis of different gender identities, migrant status, ethnicity and disability;
- build a social environment supportive of the local change and new behaviours, through conducive public discourses, media narratives, positive entertainment and marketing industry practices, reinforced social movements and publicized change stories;

- engage young people to strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms;
- spread local community-level change through organized diffusion mechanisms;
- address the risks and opportunities of online communities, which are becoming an ever-greater part of children's lives.

In working with partners to address harmful social and gender norms, UNICEF will seek to scale up evidence-based programmes to national scale, focusing particularly on: **(i) parenting programmes, (ii) education programmes and (iii) community-based interventions.**

Child Protection Systems: to support inclusive and effective child protection systems in preventing and responding to child protection violations

A 2018 UNICEF evaluation⁷² examined UNICEF's support to **child protection system strengthening** (CPSS) between 2012 and 2018. The evaluation recommended that UNICEF clarify its approach to CPSS

and ensure that the approach is reflected in organizational plans. Accordingly, UNICEF has identified **seven elements of CPSS**: (i) legal, regulatory and policy, (ii) governance, (iii) services, (iv) standards and oversight, (v) resources, (vi) participation and (vii) data. It will promote system strengthening in humanitarian responses and in development contexts, seeking to support systems that are resilient and can adapt to changing contexts. In every country context, UNICEF will seek to support systems that are inclusive of internally displaced, migrant and refugee children, as well as children with disabilities. It will also seek to ensure that support systems are family and community focused and work towards ending the use of institutional care and orphanages. Our work on CPSS strengthening is embedded in the CRC and in a human rights-based approach to programming and advocacy.

1. Legal, regulatory and policy:

To support a robust legal and regulatory framework, as well as specific policies related to national child protection systems strengthening, UNICEF will:

- advocate for and support child protection systems mapping and assessments;

- advocate for and support the development, implementation and enforcement of child protection and child safeguarding policy and legislation;
- support the development of comprehensive CPSS strategies.

2. Governance:

To promote effective governance structures – including coordination across government departments, between levels of government and between formal and informal actors – in both humanitarian and development contexts, UNICEF will:

- support the establishment of national and decentralized coordination structures/mechanisms;
- strengthen horizontal and vertical coordination at national and sub-national levels.

3. Services:

To ensure a continuum of services (spanning prevention and response), UNICEF will:

- support the modelling, testing and expansion of child protection services, with a focus on preventive approaches;

- support the development and roll-out of case management and referral systems;
- support a continuum of services across Social Welfare, Justice, Health and Education.

4. Standards and oversight:

To encourage minimum standards and oversight (supervision and accountability mechanisms), UNICEF will:

- support the development and implementation of standards and oversight mechanisms;
- engage with human rights mechanisms to support the monitoring of, and accountability for, child protection-related child rights violations and ensure that children are engaged and actively participate in these mechanisms.

5. Resources:

To ensure the availability of human, financial and infrastructure resources, UNICEF will:

- advocate for increased investments in child protection systems, services and violence prevention interventions;

- support comprehensive workforce strengthening initiatives, including the development of curricula and provision of training for child protection service providers and staff, with a focus on upskilling the workforce on preventive approaches and ensuring adequate working conditions;
- support the monitoring of child protection budgets and the development of budget briefs;
- support the costing and financing of child protection preventive and responsive services.

6. Participation:

To promote child, adolescent and family participation and community engagement, UNICEF will:


- support and promote community engagement forums/platforms, including the integration of community engagement within child protection systems;
- support and promote platforms for children's and adolescents' empowerment;
- invest in, and build the capacity of, young people to register, manage and refer relevant cases, and to act as facilitators and mentors to younger children;
- support setting standards and oversight mechanisms for child and family participation and community engagement;
- advocate for and support the establishment of complaints mechanisms and grievances redressal for children and their families.



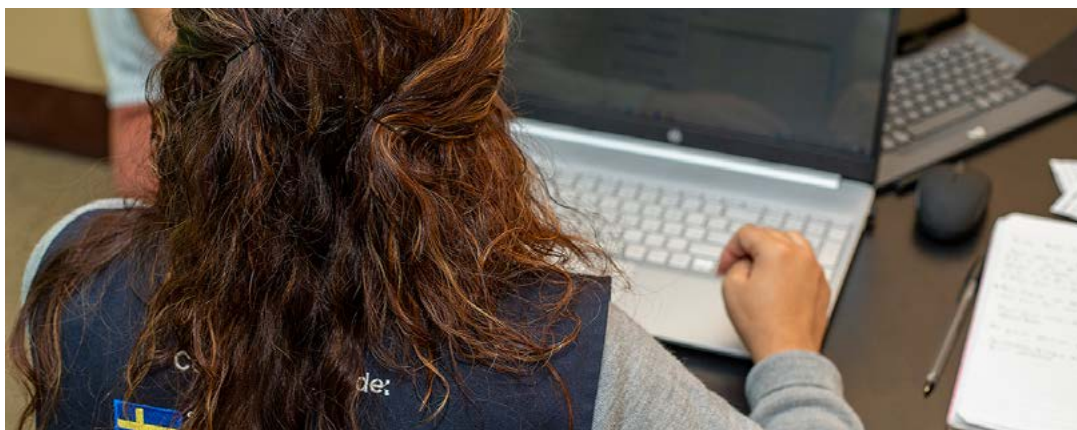
7. Data:

To support data collection and monitoring systems, UNICEF will:

- support the integration of disaggregated administrative data as part of broader national statistical systems and its use for policy-making;
- support research, including situation analyses, on factors that affect child protection (prevention and response) and child protection systems change;
- build evidence on the impact and cost-effectiveness of primary prevention interventions;


UNICEF can support the mainstreaming of child protection across multiple systems; not only social welfare and legal systems but also health systems, education systems and others..

(ZAMBIA COUNTRY CONSULTATION)



- promote and support the inclusion of child protection survey modules and questionnaires in ongoing data collection plans and mechanisms;
- support strengthened data governance (coordination, oversight and secure management);
- support capacity building of all stakeholders on data collection, management and use;
- support young people to contribute to data generation and use.

UNICEF identifies Child Protection *systems* as being delivered primarily through **Social Welfare** and **Justice** sectors, and their corresponding line ministries, institutions and functions (e.g. social work, law enforcement). It is critical, however, to

recognize the inter-relatedness and inter-dependency of child rights, and to establish a continuum of services across the many sectors that contribute to Child Protection *programming* and outcomes, particularly **Education, Health, Social Policy and Social Protection, Nutrition and Water and Sanitation Hygiene (WASH)**. Child Protection outcomes cannot be delivered without these sectors – their systems, institutions, resources and professional staff – just as their goals and objectives also benefit from the support of Child Protection. This is particularly the case for scaling up prevention approaches to the population level.

Some of the most significant inter-dependencies between Child Protection and other sectors – including core **accountabilities** of other sectors, required for the delivery of Child Protection outcomes – are listed in Table 2.

An example of an area where Child Protection systems need to work particularly closely with other sectors is in the prevention and elimination of **Child Labour**,⁷⁵ whether in terms of formal and informal economies or domestic child labour. This is because to address the root causes or risk factors, the social service workforce will need to identify children in vulnerable situations and refer them and their families as appropriate to social protection and other services, where they exist, while also working with them to (re-)enrol them in school. This is also an area where private sector partnerships are particularly important. Child labour prevention and remediation by the private sector should support and align with wider prevention policy and practice. Collaboration with the labour sector is equally critical as it is often labour inspectors who identify children in the workforce and need to make appropriate referrals.

Humanitarian: To effectively prevent and respond to child protection violations in humanitarian situations, including addressing determinants of violations and strengthening child protection systems

Humanitarian action for UNICEF encompasses interventions aimed at saving lives, alleviating suffering,

TABLE 2. Accountabilities of other sectors for the delivery of Child Protection outcomes

EDUCATION
(i) Schools as a safe and protective space for children, including in ⁷³ emergencies, (ii) education systems that address bullying and violence in schools (peer to peer and staff to peer), (iii) children in school learning about threats and protective factors , e.g., gender-based violence, sexual violence, comprehensive sexuality education, FGM, child marriage, (iv) schools acting as identification and referral points for specialized child protection services, (v) schools ensuring the safety of students as they travel to and from schools; (vi) digital learning platforms proactively seeking to protect children from online harms and (vii) national education curricula integrating digital literacy , including cyber safety.
HEALTH
(i) Violence-related public health research , (ii) violence prevention and case detection , including positive parenting, particularly through community health workers and primary health-care providers, (iii) care and support – including mental health services – for children, adolescents and women who experience violations related to child protection or, for example, IPV, (iv) the integration of teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS prevention and response strategies, (v) timely and accurate vital registration (birth registration, marriage and death), (vi) behavioural and regulatory issues relating to safety for children and adolescents, (vii) school health , as it relates to child protection issues and (viii) forensic evidence collection and presentation in legal cases .
NUTRITION
(i) Combining nutritional programmes with Child Protection / Mental Health & Psycho-Social Support interventions and (ii) preventing child labour in the food system and (iii) unethical marketing of foods and beverages to/for children. ⁷⁴
WASH
(i) Safe access to sources of water and latrines to decrease the risk of gender-based violence , particularly in emergencies, (ii) addressing climate change and water scarcity , which can both be drivers of child protection violations and (iii) ensuring adequate conditions and resources for menstrual hygiene management .
SOCIAL POLICY & SOCIAL PROTECTION
(i) Advocacy and technical support for public financing for children relating to child protection systems and services, (ii) cash transfers and other safety net mechanisms to support the most vulnerable children and households (both prevention and response), (iii) support to equitable and inclusive child protection and social protection systems – including the social service workforce – to ensure a continuum of preventive and responsive child protection services and (iv) strengthening decentralization and local governance to improve child protection services and outcomes.
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
(i) Implementation of the Nurturing Care Framework , (ii) focus on stimulation in the early years, (iii) scaled up early childhood development (ECD) services across health, nutrition, education and care in the early years, including in emergencies and (iv) positive parenting programmes.

preventing violations, maintaining human dignity and protecting the rights of affected populations wherever there are humanitarian needs. This is regardless of the kind of crisis (sudden-onset or protracted emergency, natural disaster, public health emergency, complex emergency, international or internal armed conflict, etc.) and irrespective of the gross national income level of a country (low, middle or high) or legal status of the affected populations. It is important to note that UNICEF's work in humanitarian settings is not distinct from the two programming strategies described above – addressing behavioural, social, cultural and economic determinants and strengthening child protection systems – both of which apply to humanitarian settings.

Humanitarian action also encompasses interventions to address **underlying risks and causes** of vulnerability to disasters, climate change, fragility and conflict. These interventions include system strengthening and resilience building, which contribute to reducing humanitarian needs and to addressing the risks and vulnerabilities of affected populations. Humanitarian action is essential to achieving the SDGs. The majority of

INNOVATIVE USES OF TECHNOLOGY IN CHILD PROTECTION

The Child Protection sector has not historically been at the forefront of **technology-based innovation**. This is changing through innovations such as GBV virtual safe spaces and practising remote referrals. UNICEF will seek to leverage technology and accelerate these changes through the course of the Strategy period. Recent examples of technology-based innovations in child protection include the following:

- GeoPoll is a mobile-based platform that can administer remote, **mobile-based surveys** all over the world; through SMS and voice calls to target specific populations, it is being used to conduct surveys to gather insights into communities' knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, expectations and behaviours around harmful practices.
- Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of a variety of digital platforms has facilitated rapid **delivery of positive parenting resources** to more than 80 million families in virtually every country in the world to reduce harsh parenting practices, strengthen parent-child communication and improve parental self-efficacy.
- The justice sector is seeing the growing use of **virtual or mobile courts, online training of justice professionals** and **online delivery of post-release support and supervision services**.
- **digital platforms** are increasingly being used for delivering MHPSS services and core elements of case management to complement face-to-face social work, psychological, medical and legal interventions.

UNICEF will work with governments, the private sector and other partners to pilot, evaluate and scale innovative and secure approaches and service delivery platforms for Child Protection.

countries facing humanitarian crises and situations of fragility are **off track** to meet the SDGs as we enter the final decade to meet the 2030 deadline.

UNICEF works **directly**, and in support of **governments** and **civil society**, to provide protection to millions of children, caregivers and women affected by armed conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement, socio-political crises and infectious disease outbreaks. Acknowledging that complex humanitarian

emergencies are evolving, including outside of international and internal armed conflict, UNICEF will lead the coordination of child protection in all emergency settings to mobilize and deliver a comprehensive response that prioritizes community-led action.

In **humanitarian** settings, UNICEF operates on the basis of a distinct **UN mandate** and in accordance with its **Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs)** (see below), which provide the

Our role is to be agents of peace, to promote youth empowerment via our organizations and through our participation; as youth, to become role models in our society.

(TIMOR-LESTE ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH CONSULTATION)

strategic framework and corresponding commitments for its work in humanitarian situations, and the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.⁷⁶ UNICEF’s work in humanitarian situations is guided by international human rights law and, in situations of armed conflict, also by international humanitarian law. UNICEF is the lead agency for the Child Protection Area of Responsibility in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee system, with concomitant accountabilities, and will deploy this capacity to support government and other frontline responders in all emergencies (whether or not the cluster system is activated). UNICEF also permanently co-leads the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, which is the standard-setting body for the sector.



In working with government and civil society partners and in close collaboration with UN political and peace missions, UNICEF puts **children’s and women’s rights** and well-being at the centre of its efforts. Child protection programming in humanitarian settings has a particularly

important role to play in engaging communities, governments and parties to a conflict to protect child rights and women’s rights. This responsibility extends to effectively delivering on UNICEF’s and the United Nation’s pledge to link humanitarian, development and peace programming.

The phrase ‘**humanitarian – development – peace nexus**’ reflects the fact that operating contexts rarely conform to one typology and that it can be counter-productive to assign distinct operational approaches to different contexts.⁷⁷ It further recognizes that humanitarian and development programming should be designed and implemented to ‘do no harm’, prevent conflict and build resilience. Humanitarian programming should contribute to system strengthening and development programming should contribute to preparedness and social cohesion. The CCCs, revised in 2020, embrace the humanitarian – development – peace nexus and reflect the changing dynamics of humanitarian settings, such as addressing detention and criminal processing of conflict-affected children. In the next decade, the predominance of counter-terrorism policy, legislation and interventions will have myriad effects on child protection, necessitating engagement with security and peace actors to bring child rights front and centre in the decision-making of States and the international community.

The **CCCs** reflect the objectives of supporting positive and effective systems (CCC 2 and throughout) and

TABLE 3. UNICEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) – Child Protection ‘Strategic Result’

CHILD PROTECTION ‘STRATEGIC RESULT’ IN THE CCCS: CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS ARE PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION, ABUSE, NEGLECT AND HARMFUL PRACTICES	
1 Leadership and coordination	Effective leadership and coordination are established and functional
2 Strengthening child protection systems	Child protection systems are functional and strengthened to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices
3 Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)	The MHPSS needs of children, adolescents and caregivers are identified and addressed through coordinated multisectoral and community-based MHPSS services
4 Unaccompanied and separated children	Separation of children from families is prevented and responded to, and family-based care is promoted in the child’s best interest
5 Monitoring and reporting on grave violations	In situations of armed conflict, grave violations against children and other serious rights violations and protection concerns are documented, analysed and reported and inform programmatic response and advocacy interventions
6 Children associated with armed forces and groups and detention of children in the context of armed conflict	Child recruitment and use by armed actors, as well as illegal and arbitrary detention and criminal processing of conflict-affected children, are prevented and addressed
7 Mine action and weapons	The use of landmines and other indiscriminate or illicit weapons by State and non-State actors is prevented and their impact addressed
8 Gender-based violence (GBV)	Survivors of GBV and their children can access timely, quality, multisectoral response services and GBV is prevented
9 Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)	Children and affected populations are protected from SEA by humanitarian workers
10 Community engagement for behaviour and social change	At-risk and affected populations have timely access to culturally appropriate, gender- and age-sensitive information and interventions to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices

promoting social and gender norms that are supportive of child protection (CCC 10 and throughout). Addressing harmful social and gender norms is no longer considered the remit of long-term development programming only; crises create elastic moments for societal change. Standards, evidence-based programming, and good practice across Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE) and preventing grave violations in armed conflict all acknowledge the necessity of analysing the norms that have positive and negative impacts on protection. Further, if quality response services are accessible and risk assessments permit, protection interventions can engage in community-led efforts to address social and gender norms in humanitarian settings. Do No Harm, the centrality of protection, and child-centred programming are critical principles in the design, delivery and monitoring of such work, which will grow with the sector's increasing investment in prevention.

Embracing **prevention** as a strategic shift for child protection in humanitarian action will deepen as investment increases in

CHILD PROTECTION AND DISABILITY

UNICEF's child protection work is grounded in the CRC and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD). It is also aligned to UNICEF's strategies for disability inclusion and focuses on the twin-track approaches of mainstreaming and targeted disability-inclusive child protection in both humanitarian and development contexts. This includes work on strengthening child protection systems to make them increasingly inclusive of the specific needs of children with disabilities, addressing harmful social norms, tackling discrimination, ending all forms of violence – including gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse – and preventing the separation of children from their families on the basis of disability. UNICEF supports the development of global policy and programmatic guidance and provides technical assistance to country offices and partners to strengthen disability-inclusive child protection policies and programmes.

Key interventions include: developing tools to support the inclusion of children with disabilities within child protection programming; developing a disability-inclusive social service workforce (SSW) for child protection as well as tools for strengthening the capacities of the SSW to address stigma, discrimination and harmful social norms that prevent them from providing child protection services to all children in an inclusive and equitable manner; enhancing the knowledge and skills of SSW to prevent, detect, report and respond to violence against children with disabilities; addressing the specific needs of children with disabilities in the case of violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect, including those children whose disability prevents them from reporting those human rights violations and abuses; scaling up disability disaggregation in research and data collection; and rolling out guidance on disability-inclusive child-friendly spaces and activities in humanitarian context.

integrated programming across sectors. As highlighted above, this extends particularly to Education, Nutrition, Health, WASH, and Social Protection. Humanitarian cash programming has invested in child safeguarding and risk mitigation, recognizing that crises lead people into negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage, child labour, trafficking and exploitation. However, future programming

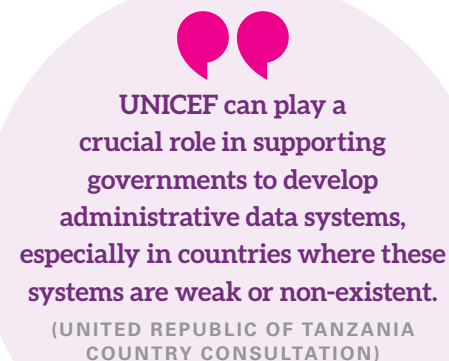
will be more ambitious, building on the trajectory of 'cash plus' that recognizes the positive impact on protection of cash programming if both safeguarding and case management are integrated into the programme design. UNICEF will put protection at the heart of its humanitarian cash transfers programmes and work more ambitiously with social protection in humanitarian settings.

PROGRAMMING APPROACHES

Strengthen data and research generation and use

Our vision for the Strategy period to 2030 is that partner governments and the international community are equipped with the **data** and evidence to address child protection adequately in all countries, including high-income countries. The data and evidence landscape for Child Protection is improving but at too slow a pace. UNICEF will prioritize data and evidence generation and utilization over the Strategy period, particularly in those areas where evidence is insufficient to guide **policy and programming choices**. In 2019, UNICEF supported 125 countries to improve the availability and quality of data on violence against children. It will prioritize building evidence on the effectiveness of **population-level preventive interventions** to reduce the incidence of child rights violations and negative child protection outcomes. This will involve systematic inclusion of risk and protective factors in situation analyses, as well as in other data collection processes.

There is a strong need for **Child Protection Information Management Systems (CPIMS)** to support Child Protection actors in both humanitarian and development contexts to manage protection-related data for case management, incident monitoring and programming monitoring. UNICEF will work with government and other partners on CPIMS strengthening, with a focus on working with government and other partners to support the scale up of **Primerio™** – an inter-agency digital public good used for case management and incident monitoring for the child protection and gender-based violence sectors. Primerio™ modules will be mainstreamed and centrally supported in an effort to bring programme efficiencies and coherent data standards to the sector. Efforts to develop advanced analytics for prevention, including predictive models and quality of care metrics, will be prioritized. Primerio™ will be aligned with **Responsible Data for Children**, an initiative that supports the operationalization of rights-based data



UNICEF can play a crucial role in supporting governments to develop administrative data systems, especially in countries where these systems are weak or non-existent.
(UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA COUNTRY CONSULTATION)

practices in the field. As of April 2020, there are currently 33 active installations ('instances') of Primerio™ implemented in 26 countries that have recorded around 100,000 cases of vulnerable children safely and confidentially. A significant scale up, targeting more than 100 installations by 2025, will be made possible by investments aimed at making Primerio™ a software as a service.

Advocate for national legislation, policies, budgets and accountability

UNICEF will work with partners to undertake **evidence-based advocacy**, including policy dialogue with **partner Governments** on laws, policies, budgets, implementation mechanisms and accountability for child protection outcomes as well as global/ trans-national advocacy. In advocating for budgets, UNICEF will apply its 'Public Financing for Children (PF4C)' approach.⁷⁸ UNICEF will work with **non-governmental partners** to advocate both for government reforms and for social and behavioural change, including within the private sector. UNICEF will also work at the **regional and global levels** to strengthen frameworks, political and institutional leadership and support for child protection. In humanitarian contexts, UNICEF will particularly support **Accountability to Affected Populations**.⁷⁹

Build capacity for scaled-up child protection prevention and service delivery across sectors

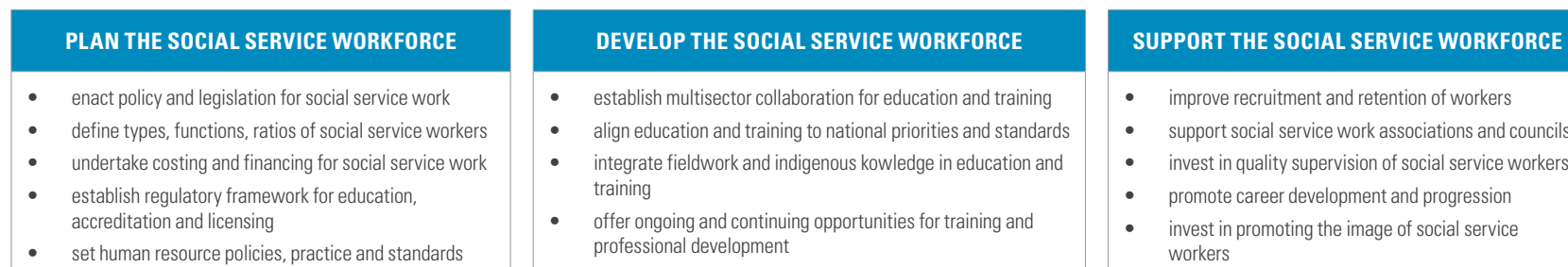
UNICEF will work with governments and non-governmental partners in humanitarian and development contexts, to **build capacity for prevention and child protection service delivery**, particularly in Social Welfare and Justice sectors but also in sectors such as Health, Education, Social Protection, Nutrition and WASH. This will include a strong focus on upskilling the social services workforce, including UNICEF's internal child protection workforce, on design and implementation of preventive approaches. UNICEF's support to building service delivery capacity will include institutional reform, strengthening mandates, establishing protocols, training staff, piloting and evaluating innovations in service delivery, and implementation at scale.

Strengthen the engagement of communities, caregivers, children and adolescents

The Conceptual Framework for the Strategy (see Figure 4 in Section II) describes concentric circles with the **child** at the centre, surrounded by the most immediate layers of support: **parents, caregivers and families**, and **communities** more broadly. Strategies to strengthen child and adolescent participation, parent, caregiver and family support and community engagement are further described in this Strategy in Section VI under Programming Strategy 1: 'to effectively address the social, cultural and economic determinants of child protection violations at scale'.

- UNICEF has the world's largest cadre of international experts working on **social and behaviour change**. UNICEF specialists work with Child Protection colleagues to employ a

FIGURE 6. Framework for strengthening the social service workforce for child protection⁸⁰



mix of social mobilization, advocacy and behaviour and social change strategies related to child protection. In working on child, youth and community engagement strategies, UNICEF ensures that children with disabilities, as well as excluded and marginalized children – including from minority and indigenous groups – are included in all processes. Specific activities range from community-led participatory initiatives to entertainment education, from the civic engagement of young people to online engagement against child exploitation and abuse and from positive deviants and bystanders approaches to community-based innovations in services.

Develop partnerships for coordinated global and national action

Nothing UNICEF does is executed in isolation. It works closely with a range of partners, including UN agencies within a UN Development System operating framework, partner governments, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, bilateral partners, multilateral partners and global funds and partnerships, academia, the private sector, philanthropic foundations and

CHILD PROTECTION AND ADOLESCENTS

There are over 1 billion adolescents in the world, representing a powerful resource for social change. UNICEF works to promote adolescent participation and civic engagement both as a goal in its own right – as a principle of human rights-based programming enshrined in the CRC – and also as a means to achieve sector-specific results. Positive outcomes of adolescent participation include:

- more influence on individual care, protection and justice decisions
- greater self-confidence, personal development and skills to protect themselves and their peers
- increased collective power and social status to assert and defend their rights
- better protection from abuse and exploitation (e.g., reduced corporal punishment, early and child marriage and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, bullying)
- decreased discrimination and increased gender equality
- more relevant services and policies (care, protection, justice)
- improved social networks and improved recovery and reintegration of survivors of violence.

Evaluations have shown that more can be done to integrate child and adolescent participation into UNICEF's work on child protection. UNICEF will promote the engagement of adolescents in child protection through:

- empowering adolescents to engage in legal, administrative or statutory processes that concern them;
- increasing adolescents' access to information on child protection issues;
- supporting platforms and youth organizations that amplify young voices, build skills and agency; including specifically for girls and for young people with disabilities;
- influencing policies that affect the right of adolescents to have their voice heard on matters that affect their protection in society, including service provision and the judicial system;
- strengthening UNICEF internal processes for engaging with adolescents and young people.

the media. Eighty-four per cent of respondents to the Strategy survey agreed that UNICEF works optimally with **country programme governments**, 74 per cent with **national civil society organizations** and 64 per cent with **other UN agencies**. Internally, the Child Protection Section (country and global staff) will increase our collaboration with colleagues working on Disability and on Social Policy – consistent with the findings of the Survey – and also with Education and Health colleagues.


Only 32 per cent agreed that UNICEF works optimally with **private sector** companies. Over the Strategy period, UNICEF will identify ways in which the comparative advantage of the private sector could be brought to bear on achieving better protection outcomes for children, particularly in the area of prevention. The private sector is a key stakeholder in Child Protection. Some business assets and practices are directly correlated with child protection



issues, while others are core to accelerate and scale up solutions. UNICEF will work strategically with business (e.g., through partnerships or other forms of collaboration) but also on business (e.g., strengthening policy frameworks on corporate standards or advocating for alignment of business practices with existing ones).

UNICEF's Child Protection programmes in their breadth benefit from close collaboration with a number of **UN agencies**, including, but not limited to, the ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, OHCHR, IOM, UN Women and WHO, as well as the UN Special Rapporteurs

on human rights violations related to Child Protection and the relevant treaty body committees, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF also works closely with global platforms – including, but not limited to, the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, the Better Care Network, the Nurturing Care Framework, the WeProtect Alliance and the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action – based on comparative advantages and respective mandates, and with regional and sub-regional bodies such as the African Union (AU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).



Academia can play a considerable role by introducing relevant degree programmes and appropriate training for young graduates to address multiple issues related to child protection.

(PAKISTAN COUNTRY CONSULTATION)



THEMATIC PRIORITIES

Focusing on the three Objectives of the Strategy, UNICEF will deliver on a number of **thematic priorities** derived from the CRC and from UNICEF's mandates in humanitarian and conflict situations. These are briefly described below.

LEGAL IDENTITY: In line with Articles 7 and 8 of the CRC, children have a right to be registered at birth and have a legal identity (SDG 16.9). They also have a right to preserve their identity, including name, nationality and family relations. Legal identity is a protective factor against many child protection violations. UNICEF supports governments to achieve universal **birth registration**, close the **legal identity** gap and increase the availability of data and legal documents derived from civil registration systems, including for stateless, migrant and refugee children. Key strategies include: ensuring birth registration; linking civil registration to other systems, including identity, health, social protection and education, as entry-points for identifying and registering children; reviewing laws and policies to provide for free and universal birth registration and to

eliminate gender discrimination in nationality and civil registration laws to avoid the risk of statelessness⁸¹, preserve family unity and guarantee access to social services; and engaging with governments and industry players to increase investments in safe and innovative technology to facilitate birth registration and obtain timely, accurate and permanent records⁸².

ACCESS TO JUSTICE: Access to justice is a fundamental right (e.g., CRC Articles 37, 39 and 40 and Article 2.3 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), is essential to the protection of all rights under the CRC and other human rights treaties and is critical to achieving the SDGs, particularly Goal 16. UNICEF will support, across all types of legal systems, children's access to justice by: strengthening legislative and policy frameworks; strengthening the capacity of justice systems to serve children, including child-friendly and accessible judicial and quasi-judicial mechanisms (e.g., children's courts, traditional/customary courts), legal aid and gender-responsive justice services; supporting restorative justice approaches, scaling up alternatives

to detention, diversion schemes and the integration of MHPSS in juvenile justice systems; ending children's arbitrary and unlawful detention, inhumane prison conditions and impunity for perpetrators of child sexual and gender-based violence and other serious conflict-related crimes against children; collaborating with law enforcement agencies; improving support for child survivors and witnesses of crime; and supporting the legal empowerment of children and adolescents⁸³ in contact with justice and welfare systems. This will

CHILD PROTECTION IN HIGH INCOME COUNTRIES

In keeping with the universal agenda of the SDGs, and informed by UNICEF's global strategy of engagement in high-income countries, UNICEF's child protection programming in these contexts will focus on two pillars: (i) advocacy, primarily through supporting public dialogue on child protection issues, promoting national collective action and legislative reform and monitoring the realization of children's protection rights and (ii) technical assistance, primarily through policy advice, research collaboration, promotion of programme innovation and exchange of good practice. Governments will also be encouraged to demonstrate child protection leadership on the global stage. While high-income countries tend to have strong emergency response capacities, UNICEF has a key role to play in providing technical support and promoting global child protection standards in humanitarian situations.


involve supporting stronger collaboration between Justice and Social Welfare systems for prevention, mitigation and response to child protection-related risks across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. UNICEF will also increasingly support public finance for children in the justice sector with a special focus on diversion and alternatives to detention and the provision of legal aid.

CHILD PROTECTION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

UNICEF recognizes the important role that AI-enabled systems can play to protect children from harm and exploitation, including to help identify abducted children and to detect child sexual abuse material. Through the Policy Guidance on AI for Children,⁸⁴ UNICEF advocates for such utilization of AI technologies to safeguard children. However, associated risks need to be acknowledged and addressed. For example, AI systems require vast amounts of data, including personal and identifiable data on children and their parents or caregivers that, if accessed by predators or authoritarian regimes, can endanger children. It is critical that when utilizing AI systems for the protection of children, data on children are ensured the highest protection given their value and unique vulnerability. UNICEF supports this through its Responsible Data for Children and Good Governance of Children's Data initiatives.⁸⁵ Further, the developers of AI policies and systems must adopt a privacy-by-design approach and consider the protection of children's data and privacy at both an individual and group level. This may require balancing seemingly opposing approaches: for example, end-to-end encryption offers the highest level of protection for data, but it also stymies AI-enabled technologies that detect child abuse content. UNICEF urges that workable solutions are found to best balance the protection, privacy and freedoms of children and their data and will continue to support these efforts through child rights and digital expertise.

PREVENTION OF FAMILY SEPARATION:

In keeping with Articles 9, 18, 20, 21 and 25 of the CRC, UNICEF works with national partners to drive forward their national care reform agenda to prevent the separation of children from families, end immigration detention and promote the use of alternatives, end institutionalization of children and promote family-based **alternative care** options in the community.⁸⁶ UNICEF also seeks to ensure protection and care for children travelling alone, separated children and children in street situations.⁸⁷ A growing body of evidence supports addressing risk and protective factors that can prevent unnecessary child-family separation. A recent review of literature⁸⁸ shows that issues such as poverty, unmet basic needs, lack of a sense of safety, lack of a sense of belonging to a community and alcohol or substance abuse are among common risk factors for separation. The same report suggests that consistent and responsive caregiving, the ability to form and sustain meaningful connections, the capacity for problem solving and the ability to regulate emotions, among others, are protective factors against several child protection violations. UNICEF will promote addressing contextually defined risk factors and supporting protective factors at the



Services should be orientated to facilitate family-based modalities of care, with a view to progressively eliminate the use of residential care for children.

(COLOMBIA COUNTRY CONSULTATION)

population level to reduce the incidences of unnecessary separation.

A significant level of consensus has now evolved around priority actions to protect **children without parental/family care**, and UNICEF will work closely with partners in implementing these at the national level, including: recognizing and prioritizing the role of families and supporting families to prevent unnecessary family-child separation; protecting children without parental care and ensuring high-quality, appropriate alternative care; recognizing the harm caused by institutional care for children and preventing and ending institutionalization; and strengthening child welfare and protection systems and services, including through ensuring adequate financial and human resources. At the global,

CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

Children on the Move includes children those who are migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced, trafficked or smuggled, whether they are travelling alone or accompanied by their caregivers.⁹⁰ Although many children migrate safely, Children on the Move face heightened protection risks, especially in transit or destination countries where they may be denied entry at borders, subjected to immigration detention, denied the right to seek asylum and excluded from access to essential services.⁹¹ Within the child protection systems approach, UNICEF has prioritized the planning, development and support of the social service workforce to prevent and respond to the exploitation and abuse of all children at the national level, including children on the move. This includes gate-keeping, awareness raising, strengthening national case management frameworks and referral mechanisms, and facilitating and developing reception, appropriate care arrangements, access to justice, child-friendly asylum procedures, birth registration, health, mental health and psychosocial support, education and social protection with the aim of advancing durable solutions.

The focus on strengthening national child protection systems promotes a continuity of care for children throughout their

migration journey, including in the country of origin, transit and destination. This applies both to cross-border child protection and collaboration, to internal migration and to returns and reintegration. At the core of all child protection interventions is the best interests of the child and the need to listen to their voices and empower their own agency. This should also be complemented by advocacy and programming to end child immigration detention, promote effective non-custodial alternatives for children deprived of their liberty, provide appropriate care for migrant children and families, address xenophobia and discrimination, prevent and respond to exploitation and abuse, challenge harmful gender norms, address drivers of unsafe migration and keep families together. While a large population of stateless children and families are in-situ, UNICEF recognizes the important links between the prevention of childhood statelessness, forced displacement, the right to a nationality and the registration of a child at birth. It works in close partnership with UNHCR and IOM and as a member of the UN Network on Migration at global and regional levels to support governments in implementing the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.

regional and national levels, UNICEF will strengthen its engagement with bilateral and multilateral organizations to advocate for strengthening international cooperation towards holistic multi-sectoral care reform. Further, it will continue to support the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to offer guidance related to the prevention of separation of children from families on the basis of disabilities of children or their caregivers and to family-based alternative care for children with disabilities.⁸⁹ Improving data collection and

regular reporting as well as ensuring the full participation of children without parental or family care are equally critical to care reform. UNICEF will continue to invest in developing and implementing data collection tools to generate accurate information on children in alternative care.

The development of assisted reproductive technology⁹² has led to more and more children born through surrogacy. In the absence of national frameworks providing safeguards for domestic and international surrogacy arrangement in compliance

with human rights, children born through such arrangements, especially commercial arrangements, are vulnerable to breaches of their rights including the right to an identity (name, nationality, family relations and access to origins). Children born from these arrangements also face discrimination due to the circumstances surrounding their birth and a greater risk of sale, exploitation, trafficking and grooming.⁹³ There are also risks for the birth mothers, given that some of them are adolescents. To this end, UNICEF notes the Principles for the protection of the rights of the child born through surrogacy (Verona Principles)⁹⁴.



MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING: UNICEF'S mandate

promotes mental health throughout the life cycle, recognizing and analysing rights violations, risks, gaps, capacities and opportunities for child, adolescent, parent/caregiver and community participation.

Promoting the psychosocial well-being of children and their caregivers is considered a preventive approach, as it is associated with reduced risk of other child rights violations, and is a joint endeavour across UNICEF sectors and cross-cutting teams. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is a priority response in humanitarian settings, where child protection programmes are focused on holistic, community-based approaches, and included in support for children affected by armed conflict, separated from families, and survivors of gender-based violence.⁹⁵ Going forward, UNICEF will further invest in integrating MHPSS in child protection programming and policy engagement in development settings, including systems strengthening, justice, violence against children, parenting, and Children on the Move. UNICEF's MHPSS work uses evidence-based interventions aligned with international standards, and contributes to building evidence and developing standards, such as Minimum Services Package for MHPSS in Child Protection. An acceleration initiative is increasing the breadth and depth of MHPSS programmes, currently in over 100 countries, as well as leadership in evidence and learning.

CHILD PROTECTION IN URBAN SETTINGS

For the first time in history, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, including 1 billion people living in slums.⁹⁶ By 2030, the slum-dwelling population is expected to reach 2 billion – one in four people on the planet. Half of these will be children.⁹⁷ Some 60 per cent of refugees and 80 per cent of internally displaced persons settle in urban areas, outside the reach of traditional humanitarian operations.⁹⁸ Children's safety can be compromised in cities in ways unique to the urban context, including exploitative labour, living and working on the street, trafficking, pollution, unsafe infrastructure, vehicular traffic, overcrowding, unsafe passage to school, armed violence, criminal gang activity, unsafe public places, violence in the home and school and environmental hazards.

Child Protection issues specific to urban environments require specific programming responses from UNICEF and from our partners. In Brazil, UNICEF has supported studies on adolescent

homicides in large cities; in Angeles City in the Philippines, it is working with city authorities to strengthen the justice system to combat sexual abuse; and in Kolkata, India, it has supported Ward-level Child Protection Committees to implement the policies of the Government's flagship Integrated Child Protection Scheme. Over the period of this Strategy, UNICEF and partners will need to focus increasingly on urban challenges. This will require: better data and deeper analysis to understand and act on urban challenges; specific strategies and resourcing for urban programming; and new and multi-sectoral partnerships, including with municipal governments, security forces, urban planners, environmental stakeholders and the private sector. In urban hotspots, UNICEF will prevent and mitigate the impact of armed violence on children and adolescents and their involvement in criminal gangs. It will work within the context of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative⁹⁹ in which child protection issues are firmly embedded.



HARMFUL PRACTICES: Child marriage and **female genital mutilation (FGM)** constitute human rights violations, threatening the lives and futures of girls and women. These practices are rooted in gender inequality and power imbalances

between women and men – and they sustain themselves by limiting opportunities for girls and women to realize their rights and full potential in terms of health, education, income, equality and a life free from violence. These practices are often exacerbated in humanitarian settings due to several factors, including sexual and gender-based violence, insecurity, gender inequality, breakdown of law and State authority or social support networks, lack of essential services and need for protection.

Progress is possible – even in high-prevalence countries – when the right mix of holistic, human rights-based, preventive

strategies are in place. Based on over a decade of experience and learning from the UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme on Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation: Accelerating Change and the UNFPA/UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, UNICEF will focus on: enhancing governments' capacity for legal and policy responses to end **child, early and forced marriage**; supporting adolescent girls' empowerment; promoting girls' equal rights to education and alternative opportunities; supporting multi-sectoral coordination and stakeholder engagement to strengthen the accessibility and quality of gender-responsive information services to adolescent girls, including sexual and reproductive health; supporting social and behaviour change communication to influence social and gender norms; and providing global leadership to advocate for action.

Strategies to end **FGM** will focus primarily on prevention and will include: developing and implementing policies and legislation that end FGM; transforming discriminatory social and gender norms that sustain harmful practices; supporting girls' empowerment; ensuring access to education and child protection services, including gender-responsive information on sexual reproductive health services;

CHILD PROTECTION AND CLIMATE, ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT

Climate change undermines the rights of children, and magnifies structural and systemic vulnerabilities of women and children, particularly the extreme poor. It is exacerbating child protection risks through resource scarcity, food insecurity, violence, conflict, natural disasters, forced displacement, increased poverty and insecure environments. UNICEF's work on climate change adopts four approaches, listed here with examples of how they can be structured to contribute to child protection outcomes:

i Making children the centre of climate change strategies and response plans: advocate for environmental strategies and standards that specifically address children's requirements for safety;

ii Empowering children as agents of change: support youth advocacy for climate change; promote inclusive skills development to ensure young people can carry out environmental solutions; and engage young people in better, more effective early warning systems/ early action;

iii Protecting children from the impacts of disasters, climate change and environmental degradation: support disaster and climate-resilient services to be informed on child protection issues; and work with government and private sector counterparts to ensure child protection issues are addressed in shock-responsive social protection measures;

iv Reducing emissions and pollution: promote energy efficient lighting at schools, health facilities and in streets; and advocate and build awareness for clean and child-friendly cities/communities with a child rights lens.

promoting gender-responsive parenting; and bridging the humanitarian and development divide. UNICEF will continue to collaborate closely with UNFPA and other sister UN agencies in support of governments and civil society partners, including women's groups, child rights groups and youth-led groups that work in this area.

VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS, BOYS AND WOMEN: Even though the foundational human rights conventions explicitly enshrine the right to live free from violence, girls, boys and women still face violence in all settings and contexts. To more effectively uphold these rights, UNICEF will focus on the root causes that lie at the heart of this

violence, including power differentials based on gender inequality and/or age. It will ensure that its programming in all contexts is designed and implemented based on a nuanced analysis of these root causes.

UNICEF's programming focuses on both prevention and response to violence to support States' accountabilities to protect children from "...all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse" (art. 19, CRC), whether in situations where adults abuse their power over children or are unable to protect them from harm or perpetuated by other children. With the

adoption of the SDGs in 2015, the global community has set a number of violence-related targets, including a call to eradicate all forms of violence against children by 2030. It is estimated that 1 billion children endure violence every year. When unaddressed, the experience – indeed, even the witnessing – of violence can undermine children’s emotional, psychological and cognitive development, contribute to the intergenerational transmission of violence and undermine progress at societal level across a range of SDGs.

Alongside power differentials based on age, violence against children is underpinned by social norms that reinforce gender-based inequalities. Girls and women face specific types of violence that are both a consequence of this inequality as well as a mechanism to maintain their subordinate status in society. Gender inequalities impact on children’s experience of violence throughout their life course and are often embedded into the family structures in which children are born, and exposure to violence in the home – including through violent discipline by caregivers and witnessing IPV against their mothers – is a common occurrence for children and women alike. In adolescence, manifestations of discrimination, inequality and stereotyping against girls intensify and traditional concepts



of masculinity and gender norms linked to violence and dominance are reinforced in boys. These factors lead to more distinctly gendered patterns of violence in the lives of adolescents.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a term that was coined to draw attention to the gendered nature of violence against girls and women, which is perpetrated overwhelmingly by men and reinforced by structural inequalities and systems of oppression that privilege men and boys over girls and women, affecting girls before they are born and continuing throughout the lifecycle.¹⁰⁰ Experienced by over one in three women worldwide, and with adolescent girls at particular high risk, this violence is present in every society and increases in times of crises. It has life-threatening and long-lasting consequences

for survivors as well as their families and communities, and it must be prevented. Effective programming requires not only dealing with individual incidents of violence but also addressing GBV as a larger system that disadvantages girls and women at every step of their lives. Unless preventing and addressing this violence is prioritized, the SDGs – with particular emphasis on SDG 5.2 and 16.2 – will not be met, and UNICEF will fall short of meeting its other programmatic goals.

UNICEF considers primary prevention of violence to be of paramount importance and will contribute to building a protective environment for all children. This will include scaling up evidence-based violence reduction strategies as identified in the INSPIRE interagency package, increasing investment

in family and parenting support and tackling the social and behavioural drivers of violence. The RESPECT Women framework also calls for child and adolescent abuse to be prevented, including via “strategies that establish nurturing family relationships”. In order that no child is left behind, UNICEF will focus prevention programmes on those children in situations of greatest risk. It will do so through building capacity for the provision of coordinated services for children, women and families, particularly those experiencing discrimination, disabilities, mental ill-health, violence within the home and other adversities, such as war or humanitarian crises. Finally, UNICEF will strengthen child protection systems to respond where children are experiencing violence to prevent further harm, as well as to support recovery and access to justice.

As part of its gender-transformative approach, UNICEF will focus on ensuring that gender-responsive parent and caregiver support is universally available, and will scale up interventions that challenge restrictive or harmful gender norms conducive to violence in adolescent peer and intimate partner relationships. With due attention to the full range of factors that may intersect to increase children’s vulnerability to violence, UNICEF will strengthen integration of gender dimensions across its violence programming.

UNICEF’s work on gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE) will focus on three programmatic objectives: (i) **preventing** GBV by addressing underlying conditions and drivers, particularly gender inequality, (ii) **leaving no one behind** by ensuring programming across all UNICEF sectors is

The challenges posed through online behaviour are already creating a major impact on the behaviour of children, with parents and even teachers mostly being ignorant about how to tackle this challenge. This has changed significantly since the time the SDGs were drawn up, and will do so even more in the next decade.

(INDIA COUNTRY CONSULTATION)

safe, accessible and accountable to women and girls by mitigating the immediate risks of violence, including those related to climate change, and (iii) **responding** by delivering comprehensive quality and age-appropriate services for survivors, including sexual and reproductive health. In parallel, UNICEF will continue investing in innovations and evidence generation, working with and for organizations led by women and girls.

Outside of crises, UNICEF will build on the experience of COVID-19 and other emergencies to apply and adapt our successful programming to support systems-strengthening for the prevention of, and response to, violence against girls, boys and women.

CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION

Child protection-related human rights violations are pervasive in the digital environment. To address risks and harms linked to children’s use and offenders’ misuse of digital technologies, UNICEF will work with industry, governments, parents and other caregivers, educators, children and young people towards five main outcomes: (i) digital technologies are not misused to facilitate sexual exploitation and abuse of children, (ii) children use digital technologies free from bullying and harassment, (iii) children are protected from inappropriate collection and processing of their data, (iv) children are protected from harmful

digital marketing practices and (v) children are aware of their digital rights and have the necessary information and knowledge to protect themselves from possible harms and risks that they may encounter in the digital world. UNICEF recognizes that children are best protected through strong national child protection systems that integrate both the online and offline dimensions of these harms and that children’s right to protection needs to be considered alongside children’s other rights in a digital environment, such as privacy, participation, freedom of expression and access to information.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) – a particular facet of violence against girls, boys and women – is a corporate priority for UNICEF. Sexual exploitation and abuse, in this specific context, is the abuse or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, or the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, by UN personnel, their implementing partners or other aid workers against the people they serve. Children and women are disproportionately at risk of sexual abuse and exploitation across multiple settings, particularly within humanitarian contexts. While this is an organizational responsibility at all levels, child protection provides several critical contributions to this agenda: (i) scaling up safe, contextualized and accessible channels for reporting sexual exploitation and abuse, (ii) providing survivor-centred assistance based on our GBV and Child Protection programming and (iii) strengthening accountability for child survivors, including related to child-sensitive investigations. Our Child Protection programming work is guided by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s priority outcomes, the UN Protocol on Assistance to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the CCCs. Making access to child-centred reporting, response services

FIGURE 7. Child Protection viewed through a life cycle approach

LIFE STAGE	PREGNANCY	BABIES & INFANTS (0-2 YEARS)	YOUNG CHILDREN (2-5 YEARS)	SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN (5-18 YEARS)	OLDER ADOLESCENTS (14-19 YEARS) →
CP SYSTEMS SOCIAL WELFARE JUSTICE	BIRTH REGISTRATION				
			POSITIVE PARENTING		
			VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN		
			PREVENTION OF FAMILY SEPARATION		
			CASE MANAGEMENT		
			HARMFUL PRACTICES (FGM & CHILD MARRIAGE)		
			MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELLBEING		
			GRAVE VIOLATIONS IN ARMED CONFLICT		
			VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS IN CRISES		
			LEGAL IDENTITY		
		ACCESS TO JUSTICE			
CORE ACCOUNTABILITIES OF OTHER SECTORS TO DELIVERING CHILD PROTECTION OUTCOMES	ECD (NURTURING CARE; STIMULATION; ECD SERVICES; POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAMMES)				
	HEALTH (VITAL REGISTRATION; SCHOOL HEALTH; VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND CASE DETECTION, CARE AND SUPPORT; BEHAVIOURAL AND REGULATORY ISSUES RELATING TO SAFETY; PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH)				
	EDUCATION (SAFE AND PROTECTIVE SPACE; ADDRESSING BULLYING AND VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS; LEARN ABOUT THREATS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS; IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL; SAFETY OF STUDENTS AS THEY TRAVEL)				
	NUTRITION (UNETHICAL MARKETING OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE PRODUCTS; PREVENTING CHILD MARRIAGE AND ADOLESCENT PREGNANCIES)				
	WASH (GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE; CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER SCARCITY; MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT)				
	SOCIAL POLICY & SOCIAL PROTECTION (PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CHILDREN; CASH TRANSFERS AND OTHER SAFETY NET MECHANISMS; CHILD PROTECTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING)				

and legal recourse safe and universal in countries where UNICEF operates is our agenda for the next decade, and our contribution to affecting the needed culture change to end sexual exploitation and abuse by our own personnel and our partners.

GRAVE VIOLATIONS IN ARMED

CONFLICT: UNICEF will work with UN partners to monitor and report on **grave violations** of children's rights in situations of armed conflict: killing and maiming of children; recruitment and use of children by non-State armed groups and by armed forces; attacks on schools or hospitals; rape or other sexual violence against children; abduction of children; and denial of humanitarian access to children. As a co-Chair of the Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting, UNICEF will advocate for adoption and implementation of concrete measures to prevent grave violations and protect children from the impact of armed conflicts. UNICEF will also pursue work on **unexploded ordnances and explosive weapons**. Children represent more than half the civilian casualties of landmines and explosive remnants of war.¹⁰¹ UNICEF will prioritize risk education, emphasize child-focused victim assistance, promote universal acceptance of the Mine Ban Treaty and advocate against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.



UNICEF will work jointly with governments and others to prevent the recruitment of children by non-State armed groups and by armed forces and aid their release, repatriation (where relevant) and reintegration. In addition, recognizing their resilience and opportunity to contribute to peace and social cohesion, UNICEF will engage with children, particularly adolescents, as peacebuilders and agents of change. This will include working with the Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General, including within the framework UN Security Council Resolutions on Children and Armed Conflict and the Secretary-General's prevention agenda.¹⁰² Work in this area will be guided by Child Protection Minimum Standard

11 on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups¹⁰³ and child justice frameworks.

Across these thematic priorities, there are milestone moments and programme approaches that support a child to make key transitions successfully across their **life course**. UNICEF will support age- and gender-appropriate programming that recognizes the differentiated needs of children at different stages. Furthermore, programming approaches will also recognize the evolving capacities of the child to participate in decisions that affect them, particularly in adolescence.

CORE INPUTS

Implementation of the Strategy will be driven by **country and regional contexts**, with programming choices and partnerships determined by local needs and strategies. The Strategy will be supported by three core inputs: (i) **financial resources**, (ii) **human resources** and (iii) **performance and impact monitoring**.

Financial Resources

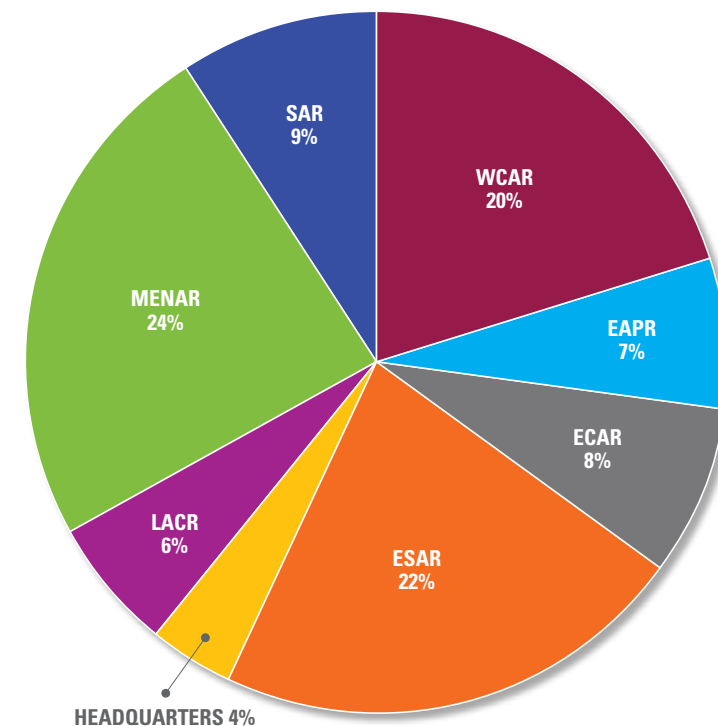
Child protection annual **expenditure** has remained just below 13 per cent of UNICEF's total expenditure for the last six years (2014-2019), reaching \$708 million in 2019. The largest increases in expenditure have been to emergencies, violence against children, systems strengthening and, geographically, to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The MENA region accounts for almost one quarter of Child Protection expenditure for the period 2014-2019, while sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 42 per cent (see Figure 8). Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon and Iraq were the top four in order of child protection programme expenses in 2019.

To implement the Strategy, UNICEF will seek increases in both regular and thematic resources. It will seek longer-term and more unrestricted funding, including funding that it can deploy for child protection system strengthening rather than narrow thematic priorities. There was a 129 per cent increase in spending on systems-related expenditure from 2014-2019.

Human Resources

As of the beginning of 2021, UNICEF had **894 full-time staff** working in the area of Child Protection – its largest single workforce and the largest cadre of child protection specialists in any international agency – though the share of UNICEF staff has remained constant at 18-19 per cent of specialist staff. Child Protection staff work in tandem with other specialist staff to deliver child protection outcomes: both 'cross-cutting' staff (e.g. Social Policy, Gender) and staff working on sectors such as Education and Health. Only 24 per cent of respondents to the Survey conducted for this Strategy agreed that UNICEF has enough staff to successfully execute its

FIGURE 8. Expenditure by region



work in Child Protection, reflecting the human resource-intensive nature of this work. In the survey, only 49 per cent agreed that UNICEF has the appropriate skill sets to successfully execute its work, emphasizing the need to identify resources for staff development and training as well as to sharpen recruitment processes and profiles in order to attract and retain appropriately qualified and experienced professionals.



Performance and Impact Monitoring

UNICEF has invested heavily in **performance and impact monitoring** for child protection in recent years. Annual performance monitoring is conducted through **Strategic Monitoring Questions**,

tracking UNICEF inputs, outputs and outcomes. Performance monitoring through such strategic indicators will be supplemented by an annual **results report** on Child Protection, **internal audits**, **evaluations** and **reviews** (see Annex 2 for what UNICEF has learnt from recent evaluations of its work in Child Protection).

Monitoring and progress reporting of this **Strategy** will be done primarily through: (i) performance monitoring of Child Protection priorities and commitments in UNICEF four-year **Strategic Plans** covering the Strategy period to 2030 and (ii) **SDG tracking** at the Goal level of the Strategy.

RISKS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

TABLE 4. Risks and Risk Mitigation Measures

RISK	MITIGATION MEASURES
Pandemics such as COVID-19 erode child protection rights, and the restriction of services inhibits the delivery of Child Protection interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partner governments and the international community to support pandemic preparedness and fast and flexible child protection response strategies, based on international human rights standards and principles, with adequate budget allocations
National Governments give insufficient priority to Child Protection, resulting in weak leadership, insufficient resources and lack of accountability for outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and support public understanding and create popular pressure for change • Build evidence on both the costs of inaction and the potential to make progress • Advocate to governments and other decisions-makers
Limited commitment from the Education and Health sectors to invest/engage in Child Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize a whole organization approach to child protection with clear accountabilities for programmes areas • Advocate with governments and decision-makers
Online risks to Child Protection increase faster than regulatory and other mechanisms are implemented to address them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase work with national and global bodies to provide effective regulation, education and other mitigating measures • Continue to promote Child Protection systems strengthening, recognizing the interface between offline and online prevention and response
Inadequate coordination between partners undermines alignment to government priorities and programme effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly communicate inter-agency mandates and leadership • Commit adequate resources to partnership work • Seek more opportunities for joint programming, including through United Nations Development System (UNDS) reform
UNICEF fails to secure financial resources for Child Protection at an adequate level and of the optimum type (long-term and unrestricted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for more and better financing for child protection at country, regional and global levels • Develop evidence-based analysis of the impact of the lack of resources
UNICEF staff lack the right skills and capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in proactive talent management and invest in a sectoral learning pathway
A growing narrative against human and child rights , together with misinformation, undermines the priority given to child rights violations related to Child Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase public understanding of human and child rights, including through formal education • Support advocacy towards duty bearers
Children or communities face collateral harm by our people or partners or work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineer UNICEF systems to minimize the threat of collateral harm to children, and sexual exploitation and abuse, arising from its people, partners and work, in accordance with best safeguarding international standards and practices
UNICEF and partners are not able to access remote and at-risk populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join up across the UN systems to lobby for access, particularly in humanitarian situations



A focus on Safeguarding: The actions of UNICEF and its partners carry risks of unintended consequences to the children and communities we serve, including possible risks to their safety. Threats to safety from UNICEF’s people, partners and work – including child maltreatment and abuse, sexual exploitation and abuse and other safety risks – can compromise child and human rights, our strategic goals and our organizational effectiveness. These risks are accentuated where UNICEF engages directly with children and adolescents in its programming, including in light of the increased focus of the Strategy on

adolescent participation. In the context of Child Protection work, UNICEF will: assess risks; establish or apply protocols and standards to mitigate risks; prevent harms through vetting, training and managing personnel and partners; promote methods for detection and reporting of concerns; respond appropriately to incidents to reduce harms (and provide institutional knowledge about referral pathways organization-wide); and monitor, evaluate and learn from our safeguarding work. Through its Child Protection programmes, UNICEF will promote the establishment of child safeguarding policies and procedures and

build capacity for their implementation in all organizations that work with directly with children (in person and/or via digital technology). These include State and non-State organizations such as schools, health centres, care facilities, sports clubs and religious institutions as well as organizations involved in child participation and research. UNICEF will work with businesses to promote their responsibility to respect children’s right to protection in all activities and facilities, including the proprietary digital platforms that children use for play, learning and socialization.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. UNICEF Child Protection Strategy survey findings: Summary of approach and key findings

UNICEF hosted an online survey between 6 February and 2 March 2020 to inform the development of the Strategy. There was a total of 404 participants – 303 internal and 101 external – with a good balance across the seven UNICEF regions. Key findings were as follows:

Programmatic priorities

- There was strong commitment to realizing the rights of children, with particular support for **CRC articles** emphasizing protection from violence, child labour, drug abuse and exploitation.
- There was strong commitment to achieving the **SDG targets**, with 74 per cent of respondents asking UNICEF to do more on SDG 16.2 (ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking, violence against and torture of children) and 73 per cent requesting more on SDG 5.2 (elimination of violence against women and girls).
- There was strong support for UNICEF to do more on **child online protection** (67 per cent), **children on the move** (64 per cent) and ending **detention of children** (60 per cent), with less support for **surrogacy** (24 per cent).
- The top emerging issues in the child protection landscape were identified as **conflict and humanitarian crises** (22 per cent), **climate change** (21 per cent) and **digitization / connectivity** (17 per cent).

- There was consensus that UNICEF's involvement is particularly critical in the areas of **institutional strengthening of national child protection systems in fragile, low- and medium-capacity contexts** and in **service delivery in emergency, fragile and low-capacity contexts**.

UNICEF performance

- 91 per cent agreed that UNICEF is one of the **established global leaders** in Child Protection.
- Most internal and external respondents agreed that UNICEF is best in class in **institutional strengthening of national child protection systems, policy engagement and influencing through partnerships and advocacy**; but least effective in **fostering, piloting and evaluating innovations** and in **social/ behavioural change communication and community engagement**.
- With respect to **Child Protection in Humanitarian Action**, 69 per cent felt there was **effective leadership and coordination**; less than 50 per cent felt there was an adequate response in: **mental health and psychosocial support; child recruitment and use by armed actors; gender-based violence; landmines and other indiscriminate or illicit weapons; behaviour and social change interventions**.
- With respect to **inter-sectoral working**, internal respondents

recommend more engagement with **Children with Disabilities** (78 per cent) and with **Social Policy** (73 per cent).

- 55 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement that **all genders and/or people with different capacities** are included in UNICEF Child Protection programming.
- 47 per cent of respondents agreed that UNICEF Child Protection programmes encourage **meaningful engagement and participation of adolescents and young people**.
- 90 per cent agreed that UNICEF is valued as an **important partner** in Child Protection programming.
- 84 per cent agreed that UNICEF works optimally with **country programme governments**; 74 per cent with **national civil**

society organizations; 64 per cent with **other UN agencies**; and 32 per cent with **private sector companies**.

- 24 per cent agreed that UNICEF has enough **staff** to successfully execute its work in child protection.
- 49 per cent agreed that UNICEF has the appropriate **skill sets** to successfully execute its work.
- 18 per cent agreed that UNICEF **resources** are allocated efficiently across countries for child protection.
- 41 per cent agreed that UNICEF's peers are changing more and **improving faster** than UNICEF.
- 47 per cent agreed that UNICEF needs to **fundamentally change** the way it operates.

ANNEX 2. What UNICEF has learnt from recent evaluations of its work in Child Protection?¹⁰⁴

Alignment and Conceptual Clarity

- The Child Protection programmes covered in the evaluative exercises were found to be well aligned with UNICEF's mandate and global priorities. However, conceptual clarity around the programme areas assessed was a concern throughout, and theories of change setting out the programme-impact pathway were limited or absent resulting in a lack of shared understanding of key concepts by staff and stakeholders.

Programme Performance

- The effectiveness of UNICEF Child Protection programmes, where evaluated, appears to vary strongly by programme context and type of intervention. Overall, however, the contributions of UNICEF and partners rarely add up to functioning service-delivery systems.

Sustainability of Results

- UNICEF and national governments face challenges in bringing national child protection policies and programmes to scale and ensuring national coverage.

Reaching the Most Vulnerable

- With regard to equity and gender, many programme documents demonstrate adequate strategic intent. In practice, however, it is less clear that UNICEF is actually able to deliver on its ambitions to reach the most vulnerable in its Child Protection programmes. Gender analysis of population-level data, needs assessments and impact measurement are scarce. Overall, evidence suggests that children and adolescents with disabilities continue to be a largely overlooked population. UNICEF also lacks evidence related to children on the move.

Joint Programming

- The Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage (GPECM) and the Joint Programme on the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation: Accelerating Change were supportive of child protection frameworks, targets and accountability mechanisms. However, they operated largely outside the child protection systems-strengthening approach and discourse or in parallel to it. Overall, evidence suggests that joint programmes bringing together the complementary mandates and expertise of UNFPA and UNICEF made critical contributions to the agendas to end child marriage and abandon FGM. However, there are opportunities to increase synergies and improve coordination between these agencies at country level.

Monitoring and Learning

- Since 2018, UNICEF Child Protection has invested heavily in improving its monitoring and reporting frameworks. The early results of these initiatives were noted in various evaluative exercises. The Child Protection System

Strengthening (CPSS) and GPECM evaluations signalled persistent weaknesses regarding the use and dissemination of data/information. Limitations in the monitoring capacity of CP staff and implementing partners at country level were also noted. However, mobile applications for field monitoring and child protection information management systems are providing new and cost-effective opportunities for data collection on field-level results.

Resourcing and Capacity

- Challenges around funding are mainly linked to the difficulty in building resource partnerships, including government-led coalitions at the national level, and in securing lengthier funding cycles from donors. Regarding staff capacity, UNICEF field-based personnel would benefit from additional technical support to operationalize the systems-strengthening approach as the skillset needed goes beyond what is typically found in child protection staff. The leadership and guidance from regional offices was found to be mostly effective.

APPENDIX. Programmatic Guidance on Child Protection

The compendium of Programmatic Guidance on Child Protection – both UNICEF-specific and inter-agency – covers areas of this Strategy in much more detail. The [link](#) will be updated through the course of the Strategy period as guidance is updated and new guidance developed.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The **General Comments** of the CRC Committee also provide interpretation and analysis of specific articles of the **CRC** or deal with thematic issues related to the rights of the child. **General Comments** constitute an authoritative interpretation as to what is expected of States parties as they implement the obligations contained in the **Convention**. Child protection is also clearly addressed in the Optional Protocols to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
- 2 The CRC Committee's Reporting Guidelines for States Parties define clusters of rights as set by the Committee. The clusters that relate specifically to child protection are: Violence against children (arts. 19, 24, para. 3, 28, para. 2, 34, 37 (a) and 39); Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18, paras. 1 and 2, 20, 21, 25 and 27, para. 4) and Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d), and 38–40). See: United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Treaty-Specific Guidelines Regarding the Form and Content of Periodic Reports to Be Submitted by States Parties Under Article 44, Paragraph 1 (b), of the Convention on the Rights of the Child', CRC/C/58/Rev.3, 3 March 2015, <https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC/C/58/REV.3&Lang=en>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 3 Perezniato, Paola, Andres Montes, Lara Langston and Solveig Routier, 'The Costs and Economic Impact of Violence Against Children', Overseas Development Institute and Child Fund Alliance, London, September 2014, <<https://childfundalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ODI-Policy-Brief.-The-cost-and-economic-impact-of-violence-against-children.pdf>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 4 See: World Vision, 'It Takes a World to End Violence Against Children', 2021, <www.worldvision.org/hk/en/it-takes-a-world>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 5 United Nations Development Group, 'The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation Towards a Common Understanding Among UN Agencies', September 2003, <<http://unsdg.un.org/resources/human-rights-based-approach-development-cooperation-towards-common-understanding-among-un>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 6 Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility, *The Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming*, United Nations Population Fund, New York, 2019, <www.unfpa.org/minimum-standards>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 7 International Disability Alliance, *IASC Guidelines on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action*, 2019, <www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/art11/iasc>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 8 See: United Nations Security Council, 'Resolution 1612 (2005)', S/RES/1612 (2005), 2005, <<http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1612>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 9 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Prospects 2019: Highlights*, United Nations, New York, 2019, <https://population.un.org/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2019_Highlights.pdf>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 10 United Nations Children's Fund, Division of Data, Research and Policy, *Generation 2030 Africa 2.0: Prioritizing investments in children to reap the demographic dividend*, UNICEF, New York, 2017, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/generation-2030-africa-2-0/>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 11 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 revision*, United Nations, New York, 2018, <<https://population.un.org/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2018-Report.pdf>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 12 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 'News: Latest migration trends revealed', 19 December 2019, <www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/latest-migration-trends-revealed.html>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 13 The number of migrant children increased from 24 million during the period 1990–2000 to 33 million in 2019. See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Migration', April 2021, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/migration>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 14 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2019*, UNHCR, Copenhagen, 2020, <<http://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 15 International Monetary Fund, 'World Economic Outlook: Update', IMF, Washington, DC, 20 January 2020, <www.elibrary.imf.org/view/IMF081/28248-9781513508214/28248-9781513508214/28248-9781513508214.xml?redirect=true&language=en>, accessed 20 May 2021. The slowdown has been even more pronounced across emerging market and developing economies, including Brazil, China, India, Mexico and Russian Federation.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Poverty', 2020, <www.unicef.org/social-policy/child-poverty>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 18 See: UN News, 'New UN Poverty Report Reveals "Vast Inequalities" Between Countries', 11 July 2019, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/07/1042231>>, accessed 20 May 2019.
- 19 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, Save the Children and United Nations Children's Fund, *Social Protection & Child Protection: Working together to protect children from the impact of COVID-19 and beyond*, 2020, <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/social_protection_and_child_protection.pdf>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 20 See: World Bank, 'The World Bank in Middle Income Countries', 2020, <www.worldbank.org/en/country/mic/overview>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 21 Save the Children, *Stop the War on Children: Protecting children in 21st century conflict*, 2019, <www.savethechildren.org/content/dam/usa/reports/ed-cp/stop-the-war-on-children-2019.pdf>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Displacement', April 2021, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/displacement>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 24 Mercy Corps, *The Facts: How climate change affects people living in poverty*, 16 January 2020 (updated 8 April 2021), <<https://europe.mercycorps.org/en-gb/blog/climate-change-poverty>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 25 Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2019*, Freedom House, Washington, DC, 2020, <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2019_FH_FITW_2019_Report_ForWeb-compressed.pdf>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 26 <[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)32279-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)32279-7/fulltext)>
- 27 See: World Health Organization, 'Improving the Mental and Brain Health of Children and Adolescents', 2021, <www.who.int/activities/improving-the-mental-and-brain-health-of-children-and-adolescents>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 28 See: World Health Organization, 'Suicide: Key facts', 2 September 2019, <www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/suicide>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 29 See: World Health Organization, 'The WHO Special Initiative for Mental Health (2019-2023): Universal health coverage for mental health', 2019, <www.who.int/initiatives/who-special-initiative-for-mental-health>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 30 See: World Health Organization, 'Mental Disorders: Key facts', 28 November 2019, <www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-disorders>, accessed 20 May 2020.
- 31 Plan International, *State of the World's Girls: Free to be online? Girls' and young women's experiences of online harassment*, Plan International, Woking, UK, 2020, <<https://plan-international.org/publications/freetobeonline>>, accessed 20 May 2021.
- 32 United Nations Children's Fund, Division of Data, Research and Policy, *Hidden in Plain Sight: A statistical analysis of violence against children*, UNICEF, New York, 2014, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/hidden-in-plain-sight-a-statistical-analysis-of-violence-against-children>>, accessed 20 May 2021.

- 33 Ibid.
- 34 See: World Health Organization, 'Youth Violence: Key facts', 8 June 2020, <www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/youth-violence>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 35 See: Girls Not Brides, 'Where It Happens', 2000, <<https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/about-child-marriage/where-child-marriage-happens>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 36 United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and Plan International, *A New Era for Girls: Taking stock of 25 years of progress*, New York, 2020, <<https://www.unicef.org/reports/new-era-for-girls-2020>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 37 Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. See: United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, A/RES/61/106, 13 December 2006, <www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 38 See: Pan American Health Organization, 'Children with Disabilities More Likely to Experience Violence', undated, <www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6998:2012-children-disabilities-more-likely-experience-violence&Itemid=135&lang=en>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 39 See: World Health Organization, 'Children with Disabilities More Likely to Experience Violence', Media Centre, 12 July 2012, <www.who.int/mediacentre/news/notes/2012/child_disabilities_violence_20120712/en>, accessed 21 May 2021; and Jones, Lisa, et al., 'Prevalence and Risk of Violence Against Children with Disabilities: A systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies', *The Lancet*, vol. 380, no. 9854, pp. 899–907, July 2012, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(12\)60692-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(12)60692-8/fulltext) accessed 21 May 2021
- 40 Hughes, Karen, et al., 'Prevalence and Risk of Violence Against Adults with Disabilities: A systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies', *The Lancet*, vol. 379, no. 9826, pp. 1621–1629, February 2012, <www.who.int/disabilities/publications/violence_children_lancet.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 41 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Global annual results report 2019: Goal Area 2', 2020, <<https://www.unicef.org/reports/global-annual-results-2019-goal-area-2>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 42 See: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'COVID-19: How the UNESCO Global Coalition is tackling the biggest learning disruption in history', 2020, <<https://en.unesco.org/news/covid-19-how-unesco-global-education-coalition-tackling-biggest-learning-disruption-history>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 43 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Protecting Children from Violence in School', 2020, <www.unicef.org/protection/violence-against-children-in-school>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Bakrania, Shivit and Ramya Subrahmanian, 'Impacts of Pandemics and Epidemics on Child Protection: Lessons learned from a rapid review in the context of COVID-19', Innocenti Research Brief 2020-16, UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti, Florence, 2020, <www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IRB-2020-16-Impacts-of-Pandemics-and-Epidemics-on-Child-Protection.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 United Nations Children's Fund, *Ending Violence Against Children: Six strategies for action*, UNICEF, New York, 2014, <www.unicef.org/media/66906/file/Ending-Violence-Against-Children-Six-strategies-For-Action.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 48 See: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 'Facts and Figures: Ending violence against women', 2021, <www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 49 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Marriage: Latest trends and future prospects', July 2018, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-marriage-latest-trends-and-future-prospects>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 50 See: United Nations Population Fund, 'Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Frequently Asked Questions', July 2020, <www.unfpa.org/resources/female-genital-mutilation-fgm-frequently-asked-questions>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 51 See: International Labour Organization, '40 Million Children in Modern Slavery and 152 Million in Child Labour Around the World', News, 19 September 2017, <www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_574717/lang--en/index.htm>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 52 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Children Under Attack: Six grave violations against children in times of war', 27 September 2018, <www.unicef.org/stories/children-under-attack-six-grave-violations-against-children-times-war>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 53 *Hidden in Plain Sight*.
- 54 United Nations Children's Fund, *A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents*, November 2017, <<https://data.unicef.org/resources/a-familiar-face>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 55 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Sexual Violence', June 2020, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/sexual-violence>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 56 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Birth Registration', June 2020, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/birth-registration>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)', February 2020, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/female-genital-mutilation>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 59 See: 'Child Marriage: Latest trends'.
- 60 See: 'Birth Registration'.
- 61 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Marriage', April 2020, <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 62 See: 'Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)'.
- 63 The human rights principles include universality and inalienability, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, accountability and the rule of law.
- 64 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Gender Action Plan 2018–2021', <www.unicef.org/gender-equality/gender-action-plan-2018-2021>, accessed 21 March 2021.
- 65 There are numerous other SDGs to which UNICEF's work on child protection contributes, including those relating to education, health, nutrition and poverty reduction.
- 66 In December 2019, the United Nations General Assembly, for the first time, unanimously adopted a resolution on the rights of the child dedicated to the issue of children without parental care. See: United Nations General Assembly, 'Rights of the Child', A/RES/74/133, 18 December 2019, <<https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/133>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 67 Department for International Development (DFID), et al., *Advancing Child-Sensitive Social Protection*, June 2009, <<https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Advancing%20Child%20Sensitive%20Social%20Protection.pdf>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 68 See: End Violence Against Children, 'Safe to Learn', undated, <www.end-violence.org/safe-to-learn>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 69 United Nations Children's Fund, *Engaged and Heard: Guidelines on adolescent participation and civic engagement*, UNICEF, New York, 2020, <www.unicef.org/media/73296/file/ADAP-Guidelines-for-Participation.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 70 Joining Forces, 'Children's Right To Be Heard: We're talking; are you listening?', Policy Brief, January 2021, <<https://childfundalliance.org/resources/publications/4236-children-s-right-to-be-heard-we-re-talking-are-you-listening>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 71 See: Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development, <<https://nurturing-care.org>>; and Rochat, Tamsen Jean, et al., *Caring for the Caregiver: Implementer's guide*, UNICEF, New York, 2019, <www.unicef.org/media/69866/file/Implementers-Guide-Prototype.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.

- 72 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Evaluation Reports', undated, <<https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/reports/#/?search=10355>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 73 See: *The Safe Schools Declaration*, 2015, <<https://ssd.protectingeducation.org>>, accessed 21 May 2021; and reports from the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, <<https://protectingeducation.org>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 74 Preventing child marriage and adolescent pregnancies can also make major contributions to nutritional outcomes for girls who are yet to complete their physical growth and whose children would be at a higher risk of low birthweight and undernutrition in early childhood.
- 75 See: International Labour Organization, 'ILO Conventions on Child Labour', undated, <www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 76 Jensen, Celina, *Understanding Risk and Protective Factors in Humanitarian Crises: Towards a preventive approach to child protection in humanitarian action*, The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2021, <<https://alliancecpha.org/en/child-protection-online-library/guidance-understanding-risk-and-protective-factors-humanitarian>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 77 Lilly, Damian, 'Protection and the Nexus: Tensions and opportunities', Network Paper Number 82, Overseas Development Institute, London, 2020, <<https://odihpn.org/resources/protection-and-the-nexus-tensions-and-opportunities>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 78 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Public Finance for Children', undated, <www.unicef.org/social-policy/public-finance>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 79 See: United Nations Children's Fund Office of Emergency Programmes, *Accountability to Affected Populations: A handbook for UNICEF and partners*, UNICEF EMOPS, Geneva, June 2020, <www.corecommitments.unicef.org/kp/unicef_aap_handbook_en_webdouble.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 80 United Nations Children's Fund, *Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Service Workforce for Child Protection*, UNICEF, New York, February 2019, <www.unicef.org/media/53851/file>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 81 See: 'IBELONG: Coalition on Every Child's Right to a Nationality', which UNICEF co-leads with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <www.unhcr.org/ibelong/unicef-unhcr-coalition-child-right-nationality>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 82 See: United Nations Economic and Social Council, 'Introduction of the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda: A holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management', E/CN.3/2020/15, 2020, <<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents/2020-15-CRVS-E.pdf>>, accessed 21 May 2020.
- 83 See, for example: Child Rights Connect, 'CHRDs, UN and Civil Society Experts Agree on a Roadmap to Move Forward the 2018 DGD Outcome Recommendations', undated, <www.childrightsconnect.org/chrds-un-and-civil-society-experts-agree-on-a-roadmap-to-move-forward-the-2018-dgd-outcome-recommendations>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 84 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Policy Guidance on AI for Children', UNICEF, New York, September 2020, <www.unicef.org/globalinsight/media/1171/file/UNICEF-Global-Insight-policy-guidance-AI-children-draft-1.0-2020.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 85 See: Responsible Data for Children (RD4C), <<https://rd4c.org>>, accessed 21 May 2021, and United Nations Children's Fund, 'Good Governance of Children's Data', undated, <www.unicef.org/globalinsight/good-governance-childrens-data>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 86 United Nations General Assembly, 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children', A/RES/64/142, <<https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/GuidelinesAlternativeCareofChildrenEnglish.pdf>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 87 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Transformative Action to Accelerate Results for Children in Street Situations in the Decade of Action [2020–2030]: Technical guidance', June 2020, <www.unicef.org/media/74256/file/Transformative-Action-June-2020.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 88 Jensen, *Understanding Risk*
- 89 Of relevance also are the two joint general comments of the CRC Committee and the Committee on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Their Families on the rights of the child in the context of international migration. See: <www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CMW/Pages/JointGeneralCommentonChildren.aspx>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 90 United Nations Children's Fund, *Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move*, UNICEF, New York, November 2017, <www.unicef.org/media/62986/file>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 91 Marcus, Rachel, Amina Khan, Carmen Leon-Himmelstine and Jenny Rivet, *What Works to Protect Children on the Move? Rapid evidence assessment*, UNICEF, New York, 2020, <<https://alliancecpha.org/en/child-protection-online-library/report-what-works-protect-children-move>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 92 It was estimated in 2019 that approximately 8 million children had been born to date through assisted reproductive technologies. See: De Sutter, Petra, 'Anonymous Donation of Sperm and Oocytes: Balancing the rights of parents, donors and children', Council of Europe, 20 February 2019, <<https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=25439>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 93 See: United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children: Annual report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material', A/HRC/43/40, 21 January 2020, <www.un.org/en/ga/third/74/documentslist.shtml>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 94 See: International Social Service, 'Principles for the protection of the rights of the child born through surrogacy', <https://www.iss-ssi.org/images/Surrogacy/VeronaPrinciples_25February2021.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 95 See: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Operational Guide on Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Humanitarian Settings: Three-tiered support for children and families', UNICEF, New York, 2019, <www.unicef.org/reports/community-based-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-guidelines-2019>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 96 See: United Nations Department of Economic Affairs, Statistics Division, 'SDG Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable', undated, <<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 97 United Nations Population Fund, *State of World Population 2012: By choice, not by chance – Family planning, human rights and development*, UNFPA, New York, 2012, <www.unfpa.org/publications/state-world-population-2012>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 98 Muggah, Robert and Adriana Abdenur, 'Refugees and the City: The twenty-first-century front line', World Refugee Council Research Paper No. 2, Centre for International Governance Innovation, July 2018, <www.cigionline.org/publications/refugees-and-city-twenty-first-century-front-line>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 99 See: Child Friendly Cities Initiative, 'Make Your City Child Friendly', UNICEF, 2021, <<http://childfriendlycities.org>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 100 Inter-Agency Standing Committee, *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action*, 28 August 2015, <<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/working-group/iasc-guidelines-integrating-gender-based-violence-interventions-humanitarian-action-2015>>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 101 Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, '*Landmine Monitor 2019*', International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition, 21 November 2019, <www.the-monitor.org/en-gb/reports/2019/landmine-monitor-2019.aspx>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 102 See: United Nations Secretary-General, 'Priorities: Prevention', undated, <www.un.org/sg/en/priorities/prevention.shtml>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 103 Jensen, *Understanding Risk*; and *The Paris Principles: Principles and guidelines on children associated with armed forces and armed groups*, February 2007, <www.unicef.org/mali/media/1561/file/ParisPrinciples.pdf>, accessed 21 May 2021.
- 104 Source: UNICEF internal analysis: Summary of corporate evaluations in the field of Child Protection, 2019.

© United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) July 2021

Permission is required to reproduce any part of this publication.
Permissions will be freely granted to educational or non-profit organizations.

Published by: UNICEF Child Protection Section, Programme Division,
3 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017

Email: childprotection@unicef.org
Website: www.unicef.org/protection
Twitter: @UnicefProtects



CHILD PROTECTION

unicef 
for every child