ROLE OF UNICEF IN THE PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS

4.1 Aims and Objectives

Wars have always been a cause of destruction to human life and the worst affected victims are children who were often neglected and left to die. The United Nations International Children's Fund (or UNICEF) was created by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War II. Originally called the United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund, the organisation was created to provide humanitarian assistance to children living in a world shattered by the Second World War. This fund was to be utilized for the benefit of children and adolescents of countries which had been victims of aggressions without discrimination. Subsequently the Assembly recognized the need for continued action to relieve sufferings of children particularly in the developing countries.

The Assembly decided to continue the organization indefinitely but changed the name to the United Nations Children’s Fund but retained the symbol of UNICEF. Though UNICEF began its mission in 1946 as a relief organization for children after World War II its mandate soon expanded to helping children whose lives were at risk in developing countries. It has worked in both the emergencies natural as well as man-made. UNICEF’s priorities have been to realize the rights of children to a basic quality of life and the rights defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its actions are based on research and experiences which help in giving children the best beginning in their life and to survive especially in times of emergencies and at the time of going to school. Almost 60 years later, UNICEF is more than 7,000 people in 157 countries and territories around the world. They work closely with national and local governments and other partners around the world. The main aim of this organization is to provide proper health care, education and food to children and women of the world especially developing countries and to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect the rights of children.

The United Nations has addressed child abuse as a human rights issue, adding a section specifically to children in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states as “Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of
happiness, love and understanding should be afforded the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life.”

UNICEF's work is central which also focuses on Millennium Development Goals which relate directly to children. They are as follows:

Goal 1: Poverty and hunger Young Child Survival and Development; Policy Analysis, Advocacy and Partnerships for Children’s Rights
Goal 3: Gender equality and empowerment of women; Basic Education and Gender Equality; Policy Analysis, Advocacy and Partnerships for Children's Rights.
Goal 7: Environmental sustainability Water and Sanitation; Young Child Survival and Development; Policy Analysis, Advocacy and Partnerships for Children's Rights.
Goal 8: Global partnership for development

4.2 Functions
UNICEF essentially focuses on five areas namely
i) Child survival and development
ii) Basic education and gender equality
iii) HIV/AIDS and children
iv) Child protection
v) Children with disabilities
vi) Inter-Country Adoption
vii) Promotion and fund raising
viii) Policy advocacy and partnerships

4.2.1 Child Survival and Development

The most perverse form of denial of child rights is poverty because poverty makes it impossible to satisfy those needs that are basic and which includes right to proper health care. The UNICEF study has revealed that many infants are born with low birth weight and is a matter of grave concern which calls for attention. Child survival and development is categorized under the following heads.

Child Development and Nutrition

According to Article 6 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, state parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life and the state parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child. Proper nutrition is very important for human growth. People who are well nourished are more likely to be healthy, productive and in a position to develop an ability to learn and grasp. Good nutrition is not only beneficial to the families and their communities but also to the world as a whole. Malnutrition is a major problem faced by the world. The persistence of malnutrition has profound and frightening implications for children, society and the future of humankind. In developing countries, malnutrition is devastating and leads to child deaths and if not death leads to maimed or impaired. As compared to the earlier scenario, fewer children are undernourished today. In the developing countries, children under the age of 5 are still underweight and less than 50% of children under six months are exclusively breastfed. Though significant progress has been made with respect to vitamin A supplementation and salt iodization, micronutrient deficiencies are still significant public health problems in many countries, and the problem persists in many parts of the world.

Child Survival and Development

Malnutrition is a pervasive phenomenon and its consequences are felt at all states of human life from womb to tomb. It is a silent and invisible emergency which takes a terrible toll on children and their families. Malnutrition, poor hygiene and lack of access to safe water and adequate sanitation contribute to more than half of the deaths. Children worldwide under the age of five either die from illnesses such as
pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria or due to conflicts and HIV/AIDS. Every year millions of women die either during delivery or in the first few days thereafter. Apart from this there are millions of deaths every year caused either due to neonatal or young child deaths and which can be prevented.

According to UNICEF every child has a right to health care, nutritious food and clean water. These disasters can be prevented by adopting innovations in saving lives such as vaccines, antibiotics, micronutrient supplementation, improved breastfeeding practices and adoption of safe hygiene practices and a simple dehydration method. These innovations can prevent maternal and child deaths and reduce undernourishment. Children can be kept away from the growing problem of poverty that affects their survival by ensuring that all children have an access to basic education and focus on children who are victims of poverty, HIV/AIDS, conflict and discrimination. High impact and evidence-based maternal, newborn and child survival interventions should be implemented to save the lives of millions of mothers and children. UNICEF has contributed in tackling the problem of child survival and development by introducing the Medium Term Strategic Plan which identifies “Young Child Survival and Development” as the first right of the child. It works with governments, national and international agencies, and civil society to support the actions at every stage in a child’s life including pregnancy, early childhood, preschool, school and adolescence. According to UNICEF it can eradicate the problem of child mortality with its experience of sixty years and meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

**Early Childhood**

Early years in the life of a child are of critical importance both in their present as well as their future. If a child gets the best start in his formative years of life, he is more likely to grow healthily with a good command over language as well as develop his learning capabilities. A child going to school leads a more productive and rewarding life. Yet millions of children around the world are still denied this basic right to reach their full potential. It must be ensured that every child is exposed to the best start in life because not only their future but also that of their communities, nations and the entire world depends on it. Every year millions of children infants around the world start their life from defenceless newborns to proactive young children who are ready to enter school. But at the same time there are countless
number of children who are deprived love, care, nurturing, health, nutrition and protection that are necessary for their survival, growth and development.\textsuperscript{10}

\textbf{Adolescent and Youth}

Young people between the ages of 10 and 24 play essential roles in the survival and recovery of their communities even while facing unique threats on a daily basis especially in times of emergency and transition situations. Such adolescents and young people are often targets of violence and bear enormous responsibilities during and after emergencies. As compared to young children they are more likely to be recruited into fighting forces, fear of being sexually abused and exploited, be forced to generate a livelihood and engage in exploitative labour, households chores, deprived of education, contract sexually transmitted infections such as HIV and lack health care. United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have worked increasingly over the past several years to support the protection and development of young people. They have taken the efforts to address the situation of young people who are affected by these crises and to enhance their capacities to find solutions to their problems and the consequence is that young people have played a vital role in bringing about constructive social changes and development. Despite these efforts there are shortcomings in policies and programmes in times of emergency and transition situations and the contribution of young people goes unrecognized. Apart from this there is a limitation on funds used for programmes that target young people in times of emergencies and are often viewed as a problem rather than as a resource.

UNICEF works for and with the adolescents. Since Adolescents and young people are vibrant and full of spirit they, have the potential to bring about advancement in the world by contributing to the society in a number of ways like publishing newspapers and magazines, running businesses and working in factories and fields. At the domestic level they manage households, take care of their younger siblings and ailing parents. They educate their peers about life's challenges and the dangers of high-risk behavior and how to protect themselves from diseases such as HIV/AIDS and help them break cycles of violence and discrimination.\textsuperscript{11}
Health

The right to survival of a child includes access to health care services to children in emergency situations and for to prevent diseases through the existing health care network. According to Art 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Child state parties recognise the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to the facilities for the treatment combat diseases in primary health care pre and post natal health care preventive health care States parties shall ensure appropriate measures to diminish infant and child mortality, full medical assistance and health care. It is one of the most important responsibilities of a state. This right requires countries to do more than merely provide for comprehensive systems of health care and insurance. It obligates them to undertake measures aimed at promoting individual and community health and at preventing diseases. Healthy children eventually become healthy adults and such people not only create better lives for themselves but also for their communities and for the world as a whole.

The core objective of the UNICEF is to improve the health of the children world over. Since their inception UNICEF has made significant progress in immunization, promoting and protecting breastfeeding, fighting HIV/AIDS, micronutrient supplementation, health education and oral rehydration to infants suffering from severe diarrhoea in order to save their lives, UNICEF has an extensive global health presence, and strong partnerships with governments and non-governmental organizations at national and community levels. It understands the reasons why children are dying and on a daily basis work to bring practical solutions to women and children who are exposed to greatest risks. UNICEF knows what is necessary to ensure the survival and health of women and children and approach all the threats that are likely to interfere with the health of a child.

Nutrition

The right to survival of a child includes nutritional facilities for children in need of care and protection. Proper nutrition helps give every child the best start in life. UNICEF has worked on nutrition programming which aims at fulfilling every child’s right to adequate nutrition. UNICEF exhibits its commitments through its high-impact nutrition programmes in the areas of

1. **Infant and Young Child Feeding**
2. **Micronutrients**
UNICEF has also entered into partnerships to create and enhance integrated interventions to maximize effectiveness, by combining vitamin A supplementation with other accelerated child survival interventions through Child Health Events.\textsuperscript{14}

### 4.2.2 Basic Education and Gender Equality

According to the Article 29 of the CRC state parties agree that the education of a child shall be directed to the development with respect to human rights for the development of a child’s cultural identity, language and values of the country to be responsible in a free society and to the development of respect for the natural environment. Also according to the Article 28 the state parties recognize the right of a child to education and they shall make primary education free and compulsory encourage the development of various forms of secondary education make higher education accessible and guidance available and to take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools.\textsuperscript{15}

Education is a fundamental human right and every child is entitled to it as it is important for the development of individuals as well as for the society. It is necessary to ensure that children have an access to a rights-based, quality education that is rooted in gender equality so that it gives an opportunity for the generations to come without having any biases towards a girl child. Education helps in paving way to a successful and productive future and enhancing human lives. It plays an important role in eradicating poverty and diseases and provides a foundation for sustainable development. A quality basic education equips boys and girls with knowledge and skills that are necessary to adopt a healthy lifestyle and protect themselves from HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and play an active role in social, economic and political decision-making when there is a transition from adolescence to adulthood. Educated adults understand the concept of family planning and are more likely to have fewer children and are well informed about the right child-rearing practices and also ensure that their children start school on time and develop the ability to learn. A rights-based approach to education can address some of societies’ deeply rooted inequalities like gender discrimination. These inequalities condemn millions of children, particularly girls who are deprived of quality education. The
consequence of such deprivation is losing out on several opportunities that come their way.

The emphasis given by UNICEF to the rights of children and women is captured by the UNICEF Mission statement which states that “UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the rights of the child and strives to establish children’s rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behavior towards children”. “UNICEF aims through its country programmes to promote the equal rights of women and children and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities”. It works to ensure that every child irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background or circumstances have an access to a quality education. They focus on gender equality and work towards eliminating disparities of all kinds. Their innovative programmes and initiatives target the world’s most disadvantaged section of children namely the excluded, the vulnerable and the invisible. It works with local, national and international partners to realize their objectives establishing educational and gender-equality goals in their Millennium Declaration 6 and the Declaration on Education for All, and to bring about essential structural changes that are necessary to achieve social justice and equality for all. Every child dreams but their dreams may never be fulfilled and their potentials to may never be realized. UNICEF ensures that every child has an access to quality learning and lays the foundation for growth, transformation, innovation, opportunity and equality. Whether in times of crisis or periods of peace, in cities or remote villages, UNICEF is committed to realizing quality education for all.

4.2.3 Children and HIV/AIDS

According to Art 24 of the Convention on the Rights of a child state parties shall ensure that appropriate measures are taken to provide full medical assistance and health care and combat diseases in primary health care pre and post natal care preventive health care etc. Over twenty-five years into the AIDS epidemic, children are still at a greater and grave risk of contracting this deadly (life threatening) disease. Children under the age of 15 years were estimated to be living with HIV and in need of treatment only few were fortunate to receive treatment. Millions of children live in families who have been contracted with this disease and it is common for a child belonging to such families to have lost a parent, both parents, or guardians to AIDS. Due to lack of proper support, many of these children experience poverty, deprivation
Recognizing this, UNICEF has placed HIV at the heart of its response for children. UNICEF launched the ‘Unite against AIDS campaign which first drew the world’s attention to children and the missing face of AIDS. It also works to meet Millennium Development Goal 6. They annually release the "Stocktaking Report" which gives an idea about the global progress in prevention, testing, treatment and support for children affected by HIV or AIDS and their parents. The UNICEF has a four "P"s guide response for children namely

1. Preventing mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV;
2. Providing paediatric treatment;
3. Preventing infection among adolescents and young people and
4. Protecting and supporting children affected by AIDS.

It also provides support to healthcare delivery systems in resource-constrained areas and the management of HIV supplies which are needed by children and their parents.

### 4.2.4 Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse

Millions of children all over the world are subjected to violence, exploitation and abuse including the worst forms of child labour in communities, schools institutions, during armed conflict and also to harmful practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriages. Millions of children who are though not victims yet are still without adequate protection. UNICEF has extended its contribution in these areas to improve the condition of children world over.

a) Birth Registration
b) Child Labour
c) Child Marriage
d) Child sexual exploitation
e) Child Trafficking
f) Children in Conflict and Emergencies
g) Children and Justice
h) Discrimination
a) Birth Registration

The right to name and nationality is one of the most fundamental human rights. Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child calls for the registration of a child immediately after birth. The official recording of a child's birth by the government, establishes the existence of the child under law and provides the foundation for safeguarding many of the child's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child specifies that every child has the right to be registered at birth without any discrimination. Birth registration is a crucial strategy in creating a protective environment for children and defending their rights. But millions of children spend much of their lives without legal identity and the benefits and protections it affords. Children who are not registered do not officially exist. The consequence of non-registration may limit the access to services and also hamper the enforcement of age-specific legal frameworks. Not being registered actually means not being counted.

Registration levels, for children under 5, are almost universal in the majority of industrialized countries. Majority of unregistered children are found in less developed countries, where only half of the children under five years of age have their births registered. The problem of non-registration is most prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Pacific, Middle East, North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, where children under five do not have their birth registered. The demographic information provided by birth registration is vital for governments to create and monitor national population statistics. Birth registration records contribute to statistical data that are necessary for planning, decision making and monitoring actions and policies that aim at promoting a culture of protection for children. It also contributes towards statistics that are necessary to or measure the progress towards the MDGs for example how many children have completed their primary education (MDG 2) and the decrease in child mortality (MDG 4) and so it is necessary to monitor the MDGs through strengthened national registration system. UNICEF supports universal birth registration within the framework of a largely child protection system, and also as part of the overall civil registration. Such an approach recognises
the link between non registration and the risk of becoming a victim of sexual exploitation, abuse, trafficking and other violations of their rights. It is necessary to build a protective environment for Children and the Government should be committed in doing so. This is necessary to ensure free and compulsory birth registration and a free birth certificate to every child without discrimination.

Many countries have made legal provisions to register births within a prescribed period but these laws are not comprehensive and are poorly enforced. Apart from this, ineffective bureaucracies make implementation more expensive and complicated. Governments should be encouraged to give necessary attention and resources to birth registration. Particularly in remote areas due to attitudes, customs and practices, parents often fail to see the betterment of their children and so are unaware of the benefits that would be conferred on them as a consequence of birth registration. Campaigns should be organized to create awareness in parents in order to encourage them to register their children. Media and civil society can also play a vital role in making families and communities aware of the importance of birth registration. Non-governmental organizations also play an effective role in promoting birth registration. Children’s life skills, knowledge and participation contribute in explaining the value of birth registration to older unregistered children can be of great help in encouraging their parents to secure their late registration and also the registration of their younger siblings. It can also motivate these children to register their own future children. Local registration facilities should be decentralized, accessible and have adequate capacity to meet the needs of families and communities.

Birth registration can be supported by training the service providers at the community level and by providing essential supplies for registration, such as birth registration forms. Monitoring and reporting of birth registration needs to be integrated with a central database to ensure adequate recording, safety of data and to protect the privacy of this information. In 2003 UNICEF worked with the government of Afghanistan to launch a nationwide campaign to register all children under the age of one.
b) Child Labour

Child labour became an important issue during the industrial revolution. The problem of child workers is not as acute in the developed countries as it is in the developing countries. The reason is that the families to which the working children belong are in need of income from child labour for their survival whereas children in the developed countries are often working to lead a luxurious lifestyle. Developing countries can transform globalization into an opportunity to reduce child labour by spending more on education and public health. Article 36 of the CRC imposes a duty on the state parties to take all protective measures for guarding the child against all forms of exploitation. And Art 32 states that the State parties are under an obligation to protection children from being engaged in work that constitute threat to their health, education or development to set minimum wages for employment and to regulate conditions of employment. Child labour is a form of economic exploitation. As defined by International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, the worst forms of child labour damage children’s health, threaten their education and lead to further exploitation and abuse.

UNICEF does not oppose the work done by children at home, on their farm or for their business as long as it not harmful to their health and well-being and doesn’t deprive them of education and childhood activities. Every government is under an obligation to provide all the children an access to education. Free, compulsory and good-quality education are essential for the development of a child. Governments must rigorously enforce laws and regulations against child labour. Time-bound national plans of action, as required by ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour must be introduced. Girls are particularly at a higher risk of being sent to work instead of going to school because of attitudes and customs favouring a male child. This hazard can be reduced if an awareness about education and its merits are inculcated in the minds of the parents in particular and the society in general. The Civil society and media too can change the attitudes and create awareness of its harmful effects on health and development. The curriculum in school and vocational training programmes can be adapted in accordance with the circumstances of the students helping in improving their attendance.

Child labour can be prevented by organising social programmes to support needy families and also those who are vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Representatives from schools, churches, labour unions and non-governmental organizations can be trained
to assess the reasons why children work and to devise ways to make sure they get admitted into schools. Non-formal education programmes can prepare former child labourers to return to full-time education, and vocational training can provide skills for a productive adulthood. Monitoring, reporting and oversight International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions 138 (1973) and 182 (1999) define child labourers as children younger than 12 working in any economic activities, children between the age of 12 to 14 years engaged in more than light work, and all children engaged in the worst forms of child labour in which they are enslaved, forcibly recruited, forced into prostitution and illegal activities, trafficked, or exposed to hazards.  

Article 32(1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) calls for the recognition of the right of children to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with their education, or to be harmful to their health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Millions of children are engaged in hazardous occupations such as working in mines, working with chemicals and pesticides in agriculture or working with dangerous machinery or toiling as domestic servants in homes. Millions of girls who work as domestic servants are especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. In Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, millions are engaged in child labour. In order to prevent child labour it is necessary to ensure that all the children go to school and education imparted to them is of good quality.

c) Child Marriage

Article 34 of the Convention on the Rights of a Child imposes a duty on the states to undertake all protective measures for saving the child from all forms of sexual exploitation which includes child marriages. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia the practice of girls marrying at a young age is most common. However, in the Middle East, North Africa and other parts of Asia, marriages either at puberty or shortly after puberty are common among some groups. While marriages much earlier than puberty, are common in some parts of East Africa, West Africa and South Asia. It is difficult to estimate the exact number of child marriages since many are unofficial and unregistered.

UNICEF’s estimation is based on national surveys. In many countries like Bangladesh, women enter into marriage before they complete eighteen years. In India too especially in states like Rajasthan even today child marriages are performed on
the occasion of Akha Teej and this is the main reason for denial of primary education to women. Parents choose to marry off their daughters early for a number of reasons. In poor families a young girl is regarded as an economic burden and her marriage as a necessary survival strategy for her family. Parents feel child marriage offers protection to their daughters from the dangers of sexual assault and offers the care and support of a male guardian. It may also be seen as a strategy to avoid girls getting pregnant out of wedlock.

Gender discrimination also is one of the reasons for child marriages. Girls may be married young to ensure obedience and subservience within their husband’s household and to maximize their childbearing capacity. Child marriage can have serious harmful consequences for children, including denial of education because once married, girls tend not to go to school. Health problems which include premature pregnancies causing higher rates of maternal and infant mortality. Teenage girls are also more vulnerable to sexually-transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS. Those children who refuse to marry or who choose a marriage partner against the wishes of their parents are often punished or even killed by their families which is termed as honour killings.

UNICEF advocates against early marriage through training village chiefs, dramas in local languages and broadcasting them on radio and TV. UNICEF also trains hospital staff that offers services to girls suffering from medical complications due to early pregnancies.

d) Sexual Exploitation

Art 34 of the Convention on the Rights of Child states that female children specially of the developing countries are being gradually and increasingly exploited sexually through trafficking and prostitution. State parties through this convention now undertake all protective measures for saving the children from all forms of sexual exploitation. Sexual activity is often seen as a private matter, making societies reluctant to act and intervene in cases of sexual exploitation and making children more vulnerable.

Myths, such as the belief that HIV/AIDS can be cured through sex with a virgin and technological advances such as the internet which has facilitated child pornography, and sex tourism are targeting children and adding to their vulnerability. Many children from children’s homes are used to make pornographic movies and
minors are pushed into prostitution. UNICEF has adopted a multidisciplinary response to the devastating effects of sexual violence. It provides the victims with timely medical psychosocial and monetary support and also creates awareness about such violence and works towards preventing it and protecting children from it.

e) Child Trafficking

Trafficking is a violation of fundamental rights and is a global problem affecting large number of children. According to Article 34 of the Convention on the Rights of child ‘States Parties undertake to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, including exploitative use in prostitution and pornography. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2000)23 also imposes a duty on states to protect children against such exploitation.

The International Labour Organization’s Convention 182 (1999) defines sexual exploitation as one of the worst forms child abuse. It prevents a child from attending school and getting infected with sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS resulting in early and unwanted pregnancies and higher maternal mortality. These factors all hinder the achievement of development goals, including Millenium Developmental Goals (MDG). MDG 1 (to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), MDG 2 (universal primary education), MDG 5 (improve maternal health) and MDG 6 (halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS). The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) asks States Parties to take “all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form” (Article 35) and to “promote physical and psychological recovery and reintegration of a child victim” (Article 39). Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (2002) on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography further defines these standards. The optional protocol to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), known as the Palermo Protocol, for the first time defines trafficking in human beings. ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999) includes child trafficking. A ‘child victim of trafficking’ is any person under 18 who is recruited, transported, transferred, harboured or received for the purpose of exploitation, either within or outside a country.
The Millennium Development Goals focus on protecting children who are victims of trafficking. MDG1 is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger which will help in eliminating the conditions that are a root cause of trafficking. MDG2 is to protect children from trafficking and support universal primary education. MDG6 helps in halting and reversing the spread of AIDS.24 Child trafficking affects children throughout the world, in both industrialized and developing countries. Trafficked children are subjected to prostitution, forced into marriage or illegally adopted to provide cheap or unpaid labour, work as domestics, forced into begging or recruited into armed groups. It is lucrative and linked with criminal activity and corruption. It exposes children to violence, sexual abuse and HIV infection and violates their rights to be protected, deprives them of growing up in a family environment and access to education.

To end the menace of trafficking it is necessary to have both national and international co-operation to deal with the root causes of trafficking mainly poverty, discrimination, exclusion and violence. But due to lack of strong data collection it is difficult to get the number of victims globally. Most of the children trafficked are forced into child prostitution and the others for agricultural and industrial work and debt bondage. In order to protect the victims governments must ratify international legal standards that address all forms of exploitation, as well as develop bilateral agreements to facilitate cross-border cooperation. Participation and non-discrimination should be the two main principles in the best interest of the child and to establish solutions. Often trafficked children are arrested and detained as illegal aliens instead of being recognized as victims. To protect the child against such inhuman treatment there should be legislation that focuses on protecting child victims and not treating them like criminals. Law enforcement needs to ensure that children in custody have an access to their families. Customs and practices discriminate between a male and a female child and this majorly contributes to child trafficking. Media and civil society’s participation can help in informing and educating the societies about the dangers of trafficking. At all times the rights of the victims need to be ensured and sensational reporting should be avoided. To protect and assist vulnerable children, parents, teachers, police, health and social workers need skills, capacity, knowledge, authority and motivation.
The concept of ‘child agency’ defines children as thinking individuals and decision-makers who have the right to express opinions regarding choices that affect them. Increase in trafficking is often associated with the breakdown of families. Essential services should be provided to children which include prevention, recovery and access to child welfare services, health and education regardless of their legal status. There should be an immediate appointment of guardians to child victims to help them re-enter the society. UNICEF is a part of the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking to facilitate a stronger and more coordinated response to human trafficking. The project aims to strengthen the regional response to human trafficking through improved knowledge, effective collaboration and better targeted action. ILO, UNICEF and the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking have launched the ‘Training manual to fight trafficking in children for labour, sexual and other forms of exploitation’. It specifically focuses on labour issues and addresses the needs of governments, worker’s and employer’s organizations as well as NGOs and international agencies working on policies.

f) Children in Conflict and Emergencies

Article 38 of the CRC imposes a duty on the state parties to protect children in armed conflicts. State parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for all rules of International Humanitarian Law as applicable to children. The principle that no child under 15 takes a direct part in hostilities or be recruited into the armed forces and that all children affected by armed conflict benefit from the protection and care be ensured.(art38) Art 39 further states that it is the states obligation to ensure that the child victims of armed conflicts, torture, neglect, maltreatment for their recovery and social rehabilitation.(art 39) The General Assembly of the UNO proclaimed the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Conflict.(Resolution 3319 (XXIX).

Children need the protection and support of their families both in times of peace and war. Children constitute about half of the victims and are forced to flee their homes because of conflict and human rights violations and who either live as refugees in neighbouring countries or are internally displaced within their own countries. Such children have the right to education and this can give them protection and skills that are important in times of conflict and destitution. But schools too can sometimes expose children to risks because they can be directly attacked by armed
forces who are in search of new recruits. As a result of armed conflict or landmines, millions of children lose their lives, are permanently handicapped or seriously injured and are separated from their families. Children under the age of 18 are also used as combatants, messengers or as sex objects. Some are forcibly recruited or abducted while others fall prey to poverty, abuse and discrimination, or to avenge the violence against their families and such children want to reunite with their parents. Young girls and women are the worst affected as a consequence of armed conflicts because they are threatened of rape, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking, sexual humiliation and mutilation and has become a strategy in wars leading to breaking up of families and placing additional economic and emotional burdens on women. But while efforts are made to trace their families, these vulnerable children should have an access to shelter, food, water and other basic services and also support and protection of a guardian.

In 2002 the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict entered into force. It outlaws the involvement of children under the age 18 in hostilities as well as requiring States to raise the age of compulsory recruitment and direct participation in conflict to 18. The Optional Protocol requires States parties to raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment beyond the current minimum age of 15. UNICEF is actively involved in creating protective environments for children. It helps to relieve suffering during emergencies and also extends assistance to those children who face threat of being exposed to violence, abuse or exploitation. UNICEF had interviewed children released by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam confirming that they had indeed been with them and were reunited with their families. It has also developed an action plan for the social reintegration of such victims and helped them get an access to school and vocational training. UNICEF has also developed procedures for monitoring and preventing child recruitment in the future.

**g) Children and Justice**

According to Article 40 of the Convention on the Rights of a Child ‘State parties recognize the right of a child accused to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child’s sense of dignity and worth. The Juvenile Justice system has to ensure presumption of innocence and there should be quick determination without delay by a competent authority which should not be compelled to give
testimony or to confess decision to be reviewed by higher authority and to have a right to privacy. According to Art 40(3) recourse to judicial proceedings and wherever possible institutional placements should be avoided. Arrest and detention of children is a violation of their basic rights.

Children are jailed for several reasons such as race, religion, nationality, ethnicity or political views. Such children are generally under the age of criminal responsibility and are kept with adult prisoners where there is a fear of such children being exposed to abuse. Very often they survive in deplorable and inhumane conditions like inadequate food and poor sanitation facilities and some are even kept in solitary confinement for long periods and are physically abused. Such arrests and detentions are sometimes illegal resulting in denial of civil protections because of the existence of extra-judicial proceedings of the police or military and parents too are denied visitation rights and are unaware of their child's whereabouts. Victims of genocide in Rwanda are in prison awaiting resolution of their case. There is a growing realization that depriving children who are in conflict with the law of their liberty is often unnecessary or even counter-productive. Children in detention face various rights violations including maltreatment, lack of access to education and health services. Indeed, a significant proportion of professionals working with children in detention facilities concede that many should not be locked up.

UNICEF with its continued efforts has tried to bring in reform and development of the juvenile justice system in Afghanistan with the help of knowledge and experience it had gained by monitoring the situation of children in conflict with the law. It has supported the children in detention and contributed in bringing about a positive change. In recent years there has been an increasing attention by the government of Afghanistan and civil society to juvenile justice and the major step taken in this area was the adoption of the Afghan Juvenile Code in 2005 for developing the administration of juvenile justice in the country.

UNICEF extends assistance to the Government in fulfilling their duties towards children in conflict with law and also to urge for full implementation of the Juvenile Code. It strongly advocates measures to prevent and reduce detention or imprisonment of children and prevention programmes involving vulnerable families, communities and children at risk. Yet there are gaps between the Juvenile Code and the international standards and norms on children in conflict with the law.
Afghanistan still has a long way to go before it can achieve full compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the child.

h) Discrimination

Art 2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child ‘states that all children are entitled to the same rights, regardless of the child’s, or their parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. However millions of children are victims of discrimination world over. Such children are denied access to care, education, medical assistance and other essential services. Discrimination often results in violence or exploitation and the worst form of exploitation is child labour where many girls are employed as child domestic workers.

Discrimination is evident from the practices of infanticide, abortion, disability, victims of HIV/AIDS, ethnicity and race, caste and birth status. Even today a male child is given more weightage and a girl child is either killed after or before birth and those who survive are denied an access to education and other essential services. Disability to deprives children of education and overall development. Another matter of grave concern is the problem of HIV/AIDS. Although there is a pressing need for further research on pregnancy and sexually-transmitted infections the problem still persists. Ethnicity and race too is a cause for discrimination. Globally even today blacks are ill treated. In Bulgaria a minority community called Roma are denied access to basic education affecting their growth and development.

Casteism is a major issue still subsisting in India. People are discriminated because they are born in a socially backward class. In India majority of the bonded child workers belong to these communities. Status of birth of a child definitely helps a child to grow in a more healthy environment because it is close to its family. A child born from a wedlock enjoys all the rights and most importantly societal acceptance which is denied to those born out of it hampering their complete development. UNICEF upholds the Convention on the Rights of the Child and works to assure equality. UNICEF helps in promoting education for girls and ensures that they atleast complete minimum primary education and grow up as better citizens. UNICEF conducts HIV tests on destitute children and if found positive, they are either segregated or transferred to separate shelter homes.
i) Children without Parental Care

According to Article 20 of the Convention on the Rights of a Child ‘States shall provide special protection and assistance if a child is temporarily or permanently deprived of a family environment and would include foster placement, adoption, kafala under Islamic law or placement in suitable institution. Very often orphans, vulnerable children, refugees and displaced children are deprived of their parents because they are detained while others with disabilities or those coming from poor families or placed in institutions on grounds of health such as HIV are denied education and suspected or convicted offenders or child asylum seekers are subjected to penal action as a result of an administrative or judicial decision.

Although the reasons vary greatly, separation from parents and family is usually detrimental for the overall well being and development of the child. In addition, placement in institutions is often not the best solution for separated children. In situations of conflict separation from the family and community protection, sometimes across national borders, greatly increases the child's risk of exposure to violence, physical abuse, exploitation, trafficking, child labour, exposure to criminal activities, discrimination including death. Children without the guidance and protection of their primary caregivers are often more vulnerable and at a higher risk of being victimized. Those who survive face the problem of malnutrition as well as physical and mental trauma. Girls are at a higher risk of being sexually abused. UNICEF prevents child abandonment by working with maternity hospitals. They counsel and extend material support to pregnant women and mothers in difficult circumstances, dissuading them from abandoning their children in order to give their children a better future.

j) Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

Female Genital Mutilation is an harmful practice which has been practiced for ages. Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) involves partial or total removal of the external genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for cultural or other reasons that are not medical necessities. It reinforces the inequality suffered by women and girls and is a violation of human rights. There are many international Treaties and Conventions that condemn this practice. Art 2 and Art 36 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) imposes a duty
...on the state parties to take all protective measures for guarding the child against all forms of exploitation.

The convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) also condemn such practices. A specific focus on female genital mutilation/cutting is found in UN General Assembly Resolution 56/128 on Traditional or Customary Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Girls (2001) and in the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, or Maputo Protocol (2003). According to the Millennium Development Goal 3 FGM/C is a violation of the physical and psychosexual integrity of girls and contradicts gender equality. Millennium Development Goal 5 states that one of the negative health implications is an increased chance of death during childbirth thus impeding efforts to reduce maternal mortality. According to Millennium Development Goal 6, HIV/AIDS amongst girls who are subjected to FGM/C hampers efforts to reduce the spread of AIDS. Its consequences on health are negative resulting in complications during and after childbirth and increasing their susceptibility to HIV infection. The procedure can cause severe physical and mental trauma even leading to death.

The most significant reasons for FGM/C is the belief that a girl who has not undergone the procedure will not be considered suitable for marriage. Governments and communities should take effective steps to encourage the abandonment of this practice by ratifying international conventions, developing appropriate legislation and supporting budget allocations. These efforts can be reinforced in national development plans and poverty-reduction programmes. Strong legislation and enforcement Laws should be introduced to ban FGM/C and penalize the practitioners and awareness programmes should be organised in schools and communities. Customs and traditions supporting these practices must be abandoned. Religious leaders should be involved to explain that there is no religious justification and harmful consequences. Grass-roots non-governmental and community-based organizations concerned with the protection of human rights and human dignity need to be strengthened and supported, as they play an important role in FGM/C abandonment.

UNICEF has done extensive work in developing new methodologies for tracking estimates on female genital cutting and other related issues. It has supported training of religious and community leaders and advertisements against FGM on
television and radio and also provided financial and communication support to local NGO’s which help in creating a movement against female genital mutilation/cutting. UNICEF has worked with the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs to conduct a survey in rural areas to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices of families with regard to female genital mutilation.

**k) Violence Against Children**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees access to basic preventive services as a basic human right of all children. Art 36 of the CRC imposes a duty on the states to take all protective measures for guarding the child against all forms of exploitation. Children experience violence at home, within their family, from other children, schools, institutions, orphanages, streets, workplace and prisons including child battering. A small proportion of violence against children leads to death, but very often it leaves visible marks. It is one of the most serious problems affecting children today. Children may not be in a position to report acts of violence for fear of retribution from their abuser. They may not consider an act of violence actually to be violence at all viewing it as justifiable. Child’s environment mainly depends on the economic, cultural and societal norms and are often victims of gender inequality and absence of a guardian that fail to protect children. Apart from these there are other factors like drugs, availability of firearms, alcohol abuse, unemployment and crime which worsen the situation having severe repercussions on a child’s development like affecting their learning ability, destroying their self-confidence, health and sometimes even leading to death or injury.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that millions of children below the age of 15 suffer from abuse and neglect, and require health and social care. A survey in Egypt reported cases of children being beaten or tied up by their parents. In India and the United States too the picture is the same. Recent South African police statistics showed thousands of cases of child rape or assault reported on children as young as nine months old. One of the major areas of UNICEF policy is prevention of disabilities. It provides vaccines and nutrition and education to such children. According to WHO approximately 70% of the childhood disability is caused by vaccine preventable diseases such as polio, malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies and can be prevented if detected and intervened early.
4.2.5 UNICEF and Children with Disabilities

Convention on the Rights of the Child • Article 23 declares the rights of disabled children to enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which promote self-reliance, and facilitate the child's active participation in the community. It also states the right to special care, education, health care, training, rehabilitation, employment preparation and recreation opportunities; all these shall be designed in a manner conducive to the child achieving "the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development."

UNICEF works for the survival, protection and full development of the world's children born with disability. Prevention of disability, early detection and appropriate early interventions to prevent impairments are essential components of UNICEF's comprehensive programme. Since the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981, the majority of disabled children throughout the world are deprived of learning opportunities. UNICEF and its partners have achieved remarkable gains in primary prevention to reduce death and illness among young children and prevent childhood disability through increased immunization coverage, improved nutrition, reduction of micronutrient deficiencies, and access to clean water and sanitation. As part of its global vision for early childhood care and development, UNICEF will focus its advocacy and programming emphasis towards promotion of positive infant and child development that reduces the risk of disabilities. As part of its primary prevention and the health and nutrition goals of the World Summit for Children, significant progress has already been made in addressing vitamin A and iodine deficiency, which are the leading causes of visual disability, mental retardation and stunting among children and providing support to national legislation. It will work with its national partners to enable families to create a caring environment and advocate with its partners to enable families to care for children with disabilities and protect them from abuse, violence and sexual and economic exploitation. UNICEF will engage families in the process of learning and building to enhance a child's, physical, emotional and social development. Though education is a Fundamental Right children with disabilities are denied it. UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and advocates for the protection, care, special needs and education of children with disabilities. Children must be made a part of mainstream national education policies and strategies. Even the United Nations Standard Rules on
the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities call on governments to provide adequate accessibility and support to meet the needs of children with different disabilities. Today children with disabilities are realizing their rights to good care and to protection from discrimination and abuse.

4.2.6 Inter-Country Adoption

For children who cannot be raised by their own families, an appropriate alternative family environment should be preferred and institutional care should be used as a last and a temporary measure. The Hague Convention on International Adoptions is an important development, for both adopting families and adopted children, because it is in the best interest of the child. UNICEF believes that all decisions relating to children, including adoptions, should be made with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration. And so it urges national authorities to ensure that, during the full implementation of the Hague Convention, the best interests of each individual child are protected. UNICEF has received many enquiries from families hoping to adopt children from countries other than their own and recognizing the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that every child has the right to know and be cared for by his or her own parents, whenever possible and the value and importance of families in children’s lives, UNICEF believes that families needing support to care for their children should receive it, and that alternative means of caring for a child should only be considered when a child’s family is unavailable, unable or unwilling to care for him or her. It is important to note that in each case, the best interests of the individual child must be the guiding principle in making a decision regarding adoption because there is a fear of the child falling into wrong hands.

Over a period of time number of families from wealthy countries wanting to go in for inter-country adoption has grown substantially. But due to lack of regulation and oversight focus is on making profits rather than the best interests of children and eventually exposing the child to abuses like sale and abduction of children which includes trafficking, prostitution, child labour. Many countries around the world have recognised these risks, and have ratified the Hague Convention on Inter-Country Adoption. UNICEF strongly supports this international legislation, which is designed to put into action the principles regarding inter-country adoption which are contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These include ensuring that adoption is
authorised only by competent authorities and the same safeguards and standards are enjoyed which apply in national adoptions. These provisions assure prospective adoptive parents that their child has not been the subject of illegal and detrimental practices.

**4.2.7. Promotion and Fundraising**

For the growth and development of any organization promotion and fundraising both play a vital role. UNICEF carries out these activities in the United States, Canada and many other countries across the globe. UNICEF is known for its "Trick-Or-Treat for UNICEF" program in which children collect money for UNICEF from the houses they trick-or-treat on Halloween night. It was also designated 1979 as the "Year of the Child". Primarily Non-governmental organizations are responsible for fundraising by selling UNICEF greeting cards and products, creating private and public partnerships, advocating for children’s rights, and providing other support. In 1949 UNICEF launched its Christmas card program and this popular fundraising program selects artwork from internationally known artists for card reproduction now raises more than US$700 million a year through its global fundraising and sales activities.

**4.2.8 Policy Advocacy and Partnerships for Children’s Rights**

This is divided into
a) social and economic policy
b) legislative reform initiatives
c) gender equality and legislative reform papers
d) statistics and monitoring
e) social and economic policy working briefs and papers
f) partnership agreements

**a) Social and Economic Policy**

Many social and economic policy issues have a negative impact on children. UNICEF focuses on these critical impacts. Their work essentially focuses on the global economic crisis and recovery, child poverty and disparities, migration, social budgeting and social protection. It works in alliance with other United Nations agencies and collaborates with partners to stimulate policies that guide national
frameworks, legislative reform and budgetary allocations affecting children and women. UNICEF advocates for action and builds capacities so that national and global investments contribute in fulfilling the rights of children even during in times of emergency.

UNICEF works with social policy advisors, ministries of finance, parliaments, the World Bank, the International Labour Organization, United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to develop and strengthen important external partnerships at country, regional and global levels. UNICEF uses statistics to monitor progress toward the Millennium Development Goals and subjects national and international policies to scrutiny against the norms and standards set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, so children's rights can be at the centre of global and country-level policy debates.

Global Economic Crisis and Recovery

In many parts of the developing world, Children in poor households are affected by the continued high food prices, economic slowdown and fiscal adjustments because parents have to curtail their expenditures depriving their right to education, health and exploitation. UNICEF has entered into partnerships with governments to provide technical assistance in education, health, social protection and socio-economic policies. It promotes economic recovery to raise household living standards such as increased investments in agriculture and food security employment-generating industry and enterprises, transferring cash to households, work schemes and school fees and presenting a set of alternative policy options for social and economic recovery that can be used in response to crisis and for post-crisis policy adjustments. Though there are signs of recovery in some parts of the world, economic recovery may not be strong enough to protect children.

Migration

Several reasons compel families to migrate from one place to another for example poverty, regional conflict, gender issues and ethnicity and race having a negative impact on women adolescents and children. UNICEF, guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, is committed to protecting children all over the world those affected by migration. UNICEF has entered into partnership with the
United Nations, government and civil society partners to provide leadership at the country and global levels in developing evidence-based, action oriented policy in order to secure the basic rights of children, adolescents and women affected by migration. UNICEF is particularly concerned with reducing the severe social costs of migration and remittances for children in developing countries, and engages in local capacity-building efforts and policy dialogues aimed at generating social protection measures and legislative reforms that are in its fundamental to the realisation of the rights of affected children and women as well as to effective development.

In recent years there has been an exponential growth exponentially in recent decades. Globalization and economic development have benefited the migrants but at the same time been disadvantageous too. Children of migrants living outside their country of birth are affected because either they are left behind by one or both migrating parents, or migrate with their parents to foreign lands. Migrant children, who are crossing borders in greater numbers, face serious risks at every stage of the migration process. Children and women, especially those migrating without documentation, are vulnerable to trafficking, abuse and exploitation. In countries of transit and destination, migrants and their families often find themselves victims of discrimination, poverty and social marginalization. The millions of undocumented migrants often have difficulty accessing educational and basic social services, and are under a constant fear of being arrested and repatriated. When children are left behind by one or both parents though remittances may help reduce poverty the effects of “brain drain” and parental absence can take a toll on their health. According to UNICEF children and adolescents left behind are at a greater risk of being exposed to drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and criminal behaviour.26

Social Budgeting and Public Finance

The Convention on the Rights of the Child indicates that states parties have the obligation to undertake measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation to ensure the fulfillment of children’s rights. UNICEF’s mission is to help countries ensure that all children enjoy the right to conditions necessary for a safe and happy childhood, as well as those that will allow them to develop to their full potential as human beings and citizens. If public investments are appropriately channelized for the benefits of children it can make a huge difference in the fulfillment of these goals.
From a child rights perspective, social budget work focuses on building long-term institutions for child-friendly policies and the outcome of social budget work is more and more effectively channelized for the benefits of women and children. UNICEF works with governments, civil society and other agencies to help ensure that budget and policy priorities reflect this commitment.27

**Social Protection**

Children without parental care, and who are marginalized within their families or communities due to their gender, disability, ethnicity or HIV/AIDS need to be protected socially. In recent years, emergence of social protection has focused on reducing poverty around the world. It is a set of public actions which address poverty and social vulnerability. In the current economic and financial crisis, social protection strategies is an important element in effective policy responses. Making social protection more child-sensitive will benefit children, their families and the world at large because they will mitigate the effects of poverty and strengthen families and enhance access to basic services to the socially marginalized strata. UNICEF works with governments and partners to ensure it is child-sensitive. UNICEF actively works to draw from the research initiatives which take place in other institutions contributing to the body of social policy knowledge.28

**b) Legislative Reform Initiative**

One important aspect of creating an environment within which children's rights will be realised is the creation of an appropriate legislative framework which enshrines children’s rights. This can be done by harmonizing National Legislation with International Human Rights Instruments. Though virtually every country in the world has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) still there is a frequent violation of their rights. Mechanisms and institutions for the implementation of the rights is one of the most essential steps to realize children's rights because the implementation of law even today remains a major challenge around the world.

UNICEF's Legislative Reform Initiative (LRI) supports efforts for the realising the rights enshrined in the CRC and in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It recognises that legislative reform must go beyond the letter of law to address polices and programming in order to make the laws effective and enforceable. The LRI includes papers which provide
in-depth analysis of legislative reform on specific issues by UNICEF and external experts and also cover a broad range of issues such as child marriage, child domestic labour, the right to food and trafficking and tools which can inform legislative reform efforts and share global experience. UNICEF reports mention the organization of expert-level events, consultations and meetings to harmonize national legislations with international human rights instruments and standards.29

c) Gender Equality and Legislative Reform Papers

Traditionally a male child is still welcomed in the family denying several rights to girls and so it is necessary to protect the girl child against this discrimination. Discrimination denies health care and education to girls as well as the information necessary to protect them from HIV/AIDS. It also deprives them of the decision making powers, to earn a living and be free from violence, abuse and exploitation in short complete denial of social and legal protection. Article two of the CRC establishes that all rights declared in the convention must be respected without discrimination on the grounds of sex which means that State Parties are required to protect children against gender discrimination.

Similarly, CEDAW also plays a vital role in preventing gender-based inequalities in childhood, as it applies to females of all ages. UNICEF recognizes the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), both of which provide the framework for UNICEF’s mandate and mission. UNICEF’s commitment to the CRC and CEDAW is demonstrated through its ‘Human Rights Based Approach to Programming’. It strives to support programmes that recognize the rights of each individual and to create enabling conditions for gender equality. UNICEF is committed to ensuring that all the children have an equal opportunity to develop their talents and through gender-sensitive and integrated early childhood care programmes work to ensure that all babies receive the best start to life. It works to impart quality education which will help then to have a productive life. By recognizing and addressing discrimination against girls and women, fight against all forms of discrimination class, race, ethnicity and age will succeed. It is learnt that the societies develop when women and girls fully contribute to the community. But unfortunately even today female foeticide is prevalent displaying the displeasure at the birth of a girl child.30
d) Statistics and Monitoring

Protection can be extended to children only if there is availability of statistical data and machineries to monitor and as we know UNICEF is committed to changing the world for children and is the lead United Nations (UN) agency responsible for the global monitoring of the child-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It strives to protect their rights, improve their health, and nurture their development through sound planning and monitoring of policy results. It measures the situation of children and women and tracks progress through data collection and analysis and through this data is used for a variety of planning and monitoring purposes. It maintains and updates global databases and promotes dissemination of evidence-based data for planning and advocacy. It assists countries to collect data through Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and through the international household survey programme which it had developed following the 1990 World Summit for Children. MICS has enabled many countries to produce statistically sound and internationally comparable estimates of a range of indicators in the areas of health, education, child protection and HIV/AIDS. These findings have been extensively used as a basis for policy decisions and programme interventions, and for the purpose of influencing public opinion on the situation of children and women around the world. MICS4 data will allow countries to monitor progress in a better way towards the achievement of national goals and global commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as the target year 2015 approaches.

UNICEF has done extensive work in the development of new methodologies and indicators and monitoring tools in the areas of water and sanitation, vitamin A deficiency, malaria, pneumonia, malaria, iodine deficiency disorder, HIV/AIDS, child and maternal mortality, and immunization for tracking estimates on child mortality, low birth weight, antenatal care, female genital cutting and other priority issues. UNICEF produces joint estimates with its partners and works to harmonize global monitoring efforts. They appear in UNICEF flagship publications such as The State of the World’s Children and Progress for Children. UNICEF data are presented in a number of sector-specific reports including Diarrhoea: Why children are still dying and what can be done; Tracking progress on child and maternal nutrition - A survival and development priority; Countdown to 2015; Malaria and Children; and Pneumonia: The Forgotten Killer of Children. Worldwide researchers, program
managers and legislators worldwide count extensively on UNICEF data to assess the situation of women and children, and to implement programmes and plan policies on their behalf. Even the media at both the national and international levels uses the data to write stories stressing the unique situation of women and children.

UNICEF's website 'childinfo' contains UNICEF’s statistical information, including data used in The State of the World’s Children and Progress for Children and the technical resources necessary for conducting UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), which are a major source of global development data. UNICEF also promotes data dissemination through DevInfo, a powerful database system that tracks progress towards the MDGs and monitors commitments to sustained human development. DevInfo offers an easy-to-use structure that quickly generates tables, graphs and maps. It is an excellent advocacy and planning tool for national statistics offices, UN agencies, donors and civil society, contributing to greater MDG awareness and knowledge at the country level and to evidence-based policy-making.31

e) Social and Economic Policy Working Briefs and Papers

Crucial issues faced by children world over are addressed in UNICEF's working papers and briefs. These papers cover gender equality and human rights and legislative reform and areas of policy work in UNICEF: the global economic crisis and recovery, child poverty, child-sensitive social protection, social budgeting and migration. These paper series represent independent research and analysis of internal and external experts and summarize up to date technical analysis and information on pressing economic and social policy issues.32

f) Partnership Agreements

UNICEF in partnership with governments, national and international including the private sector, and civil society advocates and supports the creation of a protective environment for children. National child protection systems, protective social practices and children’s own empowerment and monitoring are the elements of protective environment and enable countries, communities and families to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse.33 From time to time UNICEF has organized various child development programmes to achieve its aims and objectives.
**Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre**

The Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre is a collaborative research and policy programme whose aim is to contribute to global poverty reduction efforts. In order to achieve its goals it has not only involved Save the Children and the Chronic Poverty Research Centre but has also partnered with China, India, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia.

**Committee on the Rights of the Child**

The Committee on the Rights of the Child is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/40220415160091.html) by its State parties.

**Eurochild**

Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to improve the quality of life of children and young people. It works to strengthen the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Equity for Children**

Equity for Children is an initiative of the Graduate Program in International Affairs at the New School in partnership with the Graduate School of Social Service at Fordham University.

**Plan International**

Plan International works to promote child rights and to free millions of children from the crutches out of poverty. It is based on eight core areas namely education, health, water and sanitation, protection, economic security, emergencies, child participation and sexual health, including HIV. UNICEF has worked in more than 90 countries around the world improving access to safe water and sanitation and promoting hygiene awareness. UNICEF programmes have not only emphasised on water supply but also on sanitation, policy development, building the capacity of institutions and raising awareness about hygiene. It has a human rights based approach and works in partnership with communities especially women and children in planning, implementing and maintaining water and sanitation systems and to
achieve these objects it works with the government and other partners to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of these programmes.

**Save the Children UK**

Save the Children UK works to ensure whether children get proper healthcare, food, education and protection.

**TransMONEE database**

The TransMONEE database captures a range of data relevant to the social and economic situation and well-being of children, young people and women in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

**Young Lives**

Young Lives is a long-term international research project investigating the changing nature of childhood poverty in order to improve understanding of the causes and consequences of childhood poverty and to examine how policies affect children's well-being and to inform the development and implementation of policies and practices that will reduce childhood poverty.

**4.3 UNICEF Activities**

**4.3.1 Global Campaigns**

**1953-** In 1953 UNICEF became a permanent part of the UN and began a successful global campaign against yaws, a disfiguring disease affecting millions of children, and one that could be cured with penicillin.

**1959-** In 1959 the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defined children’s rights to protection, education, health care, shelter and good nutrition.

**1961-** In 1961 it focused on education which was an outcome of more than a decade of focus on child health issues, UNICEF expanded its interests to address the needs of the whole child. Thus, showcasing its concern for education to children which was started with training teachers and equipping classrooms in newly independent countries.

**1966-** In 1966 they worked in the area of water and sanitation which was in response to a crippling drought that affected hundreds of villages in northern India.
1979 - The year 1979 was marked the International Year of the Child by celebrating around the world. All people and organizations reaffirmed their commitment to children’s rights.

1981 - In 1981 The World Health Assembly adopted the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes in order to encourage breastfeeding, and reduced the threats to infant health.

1982 - In 1982 UNICEF launched a drive to save the lives of millions of children each year. The ‘revolution’ was based on four simple, low-cost techniques like growth monitoring, oral rehydration therapy, breastfeeding and immunization.

1984 - In the year 1984 UNICEF studied “Adjustment with a Human Face” which prompted a global debate on how to protect children and women from the malign effects of the economic adjustments and reforms taken to reduce national debt in poor countries.


1998 - In 1998 for the first time United Nations Security Council debated on the issue of children and conflict which reflected the strength of international concern over the effects of war on children.

2001 - In 2001 the ‘Say Yes for Children’ campaign was launched to mobilize every citizen of every nation to change the world with children and to pledge their support for critical actions to improve children’s lives.

2002 - In 2002 a landmark Special Session of the UN General Assembly was convened to review progress since the World Summit for Children in 1990 and re-energize global commitment to children's rights. It was the first such Session devoted exclusively to children and the first to include them as official delegates.

2006 - As part of the Mid-term Strategic Plan and the Millennium Development Goals priorities, UNICEF India is committed to ensuring quality education to all the children, especially girls. The current Master Plan of Operations (MPO) in cooperation with the Government of India supports the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a national plan for the universalization of elementary education and to ensure that all
the children have an access to quality education and complete a full course of primary schooling. UNICEF in partnership with countries across the globe launched a campaign to focus world’s attention on the impact HIV and AIDS under the banner “Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS”, a Global Campaign on Children and AIDS to raise an alarm for millions of children affected by HIV and press countries to take action to protect the future generations. With this Campaign East Asian and Pacific countries have already taken a step towards protecting children against HIV. They are committed to foster a great and effective alliance to halt HIV and enhance survival through treatment and care. In 2010 a Global Evaluation campaign ‘Unite for Children, Unite Against AIDS’ was launched. An external evaluation of the first five years of the campaign was conducted between December 2009 and April 2010 which provided an overview of the evaluation 2005 and recommendations for future campaign work which shall continue through 2015.

2010 - In 2010 UNICEF Led a Campaign For 69 Million Out-Of-School Children to provide schooling to some 69 million children who were either unable to go to school or didn’t have schools.

2014- The West African Ebola epidemic, the largest in history, the virus for the first time has been transmitted across international borders and has reached urban centres. UNICEF is working closely with government authorities and communities to help raise awareness and stop the virus from spreading and prompting them to act quickly to halt its spread especially amongst children who are vulnerable due to low immunity and malnourishment. The organization is also helping the governments in providing vaccinations and to hand-washing in the campaign against Ebola through trained community health workers. The WHO with support from UNICEF and Doctors are also working towards stopping the spreading of water borne disease namely cholera by vaccinations.

4.3.2 UNICEF and the Government

Since UNICEF is an inter-governmental organization it is accountable to governments for all the activities it carries out. The basic function of UNICEF is to help Governments of developing countries to improve the quality of their children’s lives. According to them children are means as well as the beneficiaries of national development and that enlightened social policies benefiting children are a prerequisite for sustained economic progress. It relies on contributions from governments
and private donors. Governments contribute two thirds of the organization's resources and the balance through private groups and individuals to the National Committees. The UNICEF National Committees in different countries help in raising funds from the private sector, promoting children's rights, and securing worldwide visibility for children who are threatened by poverty, disasters, armed conflict, abuse and exploitation. Their programs categorically emphasize on developing community-level services to promote the health and well-being of children.

UNICEF's work is guided by regional offices who provide the necessary technical assistance and distribute essential items like education, emergency shelters lifesaving vaccines, antiretroviral medicines for children and mothers with HIV and nutritional supplements.

4.3.3 Research Area

The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC)

The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre is the main research arm of UNICEF. It was established in Florence, Italy, in 1988 to strengthen the research capability of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to improve international understanding of children’s rights and to support its advocacy for children worldwide. The Centre was formally known as the International Child Development Centre whose primary objectives are to improve international understanding of the issues relating to children's rights, to promote economic policies that advance the cause of children, and to help facilitate the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in both developed and developing countries. It focuses on issues which are relevant to the realization of children's rights, in developing and developed countries. It works in collaboration with international experts, and policy makers to achieve the following goals namely

1) Generation and communication of strategic and influential knowledge on issues affecting children and the realization of their rights.
2) Knowledge exchange and brokering, support UNICEF's advocacy, policy and programme development in support of the Millennium Agenda
3) Securing and strengthening the Centre's institutional and financial basis.

The Centre's publications contributes to a global debate on child right issues and opinions by authors, editors and experts. It is funded by the Italian Government and
for specific projects financial support is extended by other governments, international institutions and private sources, including UNICEF’s National Committees. The centre works and informs UNICEF on advocacy and policy and carries out its research in consultation with other research institutions and UNICEF experts. It undertakes this research to
1) monitor the changing situation of children
2) highlight the chronic and continuing gaps in child-related data
3) support and expand efforts to fill these gaps
4) influence policy decisions in favour of children

IRC’s three major publications are the Innocenti Social Monitor and Regional MONEE Report, the Innocenti Digests and the Innocenti Report Card series. It promotes debriefing of staff members whose experience may contribute to organizational learning and hosts seminars and expert discussions on emerging and current children’s rights issues. The IRC’s research helps to promote a new global ethic for children based on their fundamental human rights

4.3.4 UNICEF Programmes

a) Corporate Partnership

UNICEF works together with companies all over the world to raise money to support its Education and Literacy Programmes both national and international. Since 2005, the organization is supported by Montblanc, to help children globally to have an easy access to education.

b) Water and Sanitation Programme in Senegal

Almost fifty per cent of the developing world’s population lacks improved sanitation facilities, and over millions still use unsafe drinking water sources. Inadequate access to safe water and sanitation services, coupled with poor hygiene practices, kills and sickens thousands of children every day, and leads to impoverishment and diminished opportunities for the others. Poor sanitation, water and hygiene have serious repercussions especially girls who are denied right to education because their schools lack decent sanitation facilities. UNICEF launched its UNICEF WASH programmes which are designed to contribute to the Millennium Development Goal for water and sanitation UNICEF works in more than 90 countries around the world to improve water supplies and sanitation facilities in schools and
communities, and to promote safe hygiene practices. It provides relief to nations threatened by disrupted water supplies and disease in times of emergency. It sponsors a number of activities and works with partners, including families, communities, governments and organizations.  

c) UNICEF’s Emergency Supplies to Vulnerable Flood-Hit Children & families in Pakistan

“Children from poor and vulnerable families are among the worst affected by the severe flooding and they need immediate help. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced from their homes, with little possibility of returning soon. There is minimal access to essential services” - Mr Rohrmann. Children are vulnerable by displacement caused due to natural disasters like floods, tsunami, earthquakes, famines, etc. and are at a risk of contracting diseases like diarrhoea and measles. The most immediate needs of flood affected children are clean water, sanitation, health and nutrition. In Badin district UNICEF delivered around 200,000 litres of water to an estimated 40,000 people each day and provided thousands of water purification sachets. UNICEF has also supported the distribution of almost 60,000 insecticide-treated bed nets to severely-affected families. Mobile teams have vaccinated 100,000 children against measles and polio, UNICEF has also dispatched basic medicines for up to 500,000 people along with many newborn kits.  

d) WASH Programme

Almost fifty percent of the developing world’s population – 2.5 billion people lack improved sanitation facilities, and over 884 million people still use unsafe drinking water sources. Inadequate access to safe water and sanitation services, coupled with poor hygiene practices, kills and sickens thousands of children every day, and leads to impoverishment and diminished opportunities for thousands more. Poor sanitation, water and hygiene have many other serious repercussions. Children – and particularly girls – are denied their right to education because their schools lack private and decent sanitation facilities. Women are forced to spend large parts of their day fetching water. Poor farmers and wage earners are less productive due to illness, health systems are overwhelmed and national economies suffer. Without WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), sustainable development is impossible. UNICEF works in more than 90 countries around the world to improve
water supplies and sanitation facilities in schools and communities, and to promote safe hygiene practices. All UNICEF WASH programmes are designed to contribute to the Millennium Development Goal for water and sanitation.

e) Special Training Programmes in India to help former Child Labourers enter the school system

The educational trend in India is gradually improving because of the introduction of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act of 2009 which legally guarantees a right to quality primary education to all the children in India. UNICEF aims at reaching the most marginalized sections of the society in order to provide elementary education to the children of poverty stricken families and organizes special training programmes to help former child labourers enter the school system who have never been to school before, or who have dropped out early and to ensure that every child completes minimum eight years of child friendly education.

f) Health Care in Somalia

UNICEF plays a central role in the provision of primary health care in Somalia. It is the main supplier of essential drugs and supplies to the providers of health services in Somalia and has worked to resolve many health related issues. UNICEF’s major achievement has been the establishment of a regular supply of vaccines for the Expanded Programme for Immunisation (EPI). "Piggy-backing" Vitamin A supplementation to EPI has resulted in improvements in coverage of this micronutrient. UNICEF has proved that the private sector and the local NGOs can provide immunisations, and local authorities can be responsible for logistics.

g) UNICEF Raised money for children affected by disasters in Japan

“No one is better at helping children in times of crisis than UNICEF” - Caryl Stern, President & CEO of the U.S. Fund for UNICEF. UNICEF has raised funds to help children in Japan who were victims of earthquake and tsunami in 2011. These resources have catered to the essential needs of children such as health, development and protection. It has worked closely with private citizens, local NGOs, volunteers, schools and the business community to make their mission a success."
h) UNICEF Programme in Afghanistan to Provide Thousands of Schools with Safe Water

In Afghanistan’s rural areas still clean running water and improved toilets are rare luxuries. Less than half of the country’s population does not have an access to improved drinking water sources and the situation has further worsened due to inadequate rainfall for the last couple of years. Poor hygiene awareness, insufficient access to safe water and lack of sanitary toilets are major factors contributing to the widespread presence of diarrhoeal diseases leading to child mortality. UNICEF has provided safe drinking water and sanitation facilities to students in Afghanistan and through its new country programme for 2010 through 2013, UNICEF plans to equip more schools with water and sanitation facilities, including separate toilets for boys and girls. It is also working to educate students on safe hygiene practices with the hope that they become the agents of change.37

i) Challenges Ahead for Haiti’s Recovery

After the 2010 earthquake in Haiti more than 600,000 people remained in displacement camps. UNICEF has focused on preparedness during the hurricane season. It has provided emergency supplies throughout the country and deployed teams and transport trucks to ensure a response in the event when there is limited access transportation. During cholera outbreak lakhs were killed and UNICEF expanded access to safe drinking water with sustainable water management systems to provide safe water to the people of Haiti. UNICEF responded to this epidemic through social mobilization and awareness and support for treatment centers. UNICEF planned a policy for free and compulsory education and has advocated Child-Friendly Schools. UNICEF supports President Martelly's goal to abolish school fees to ensure that Haiti is positioned to provide quality education for all children. UNICEF has trained child protection and child rights advocates and worked with partners to identify and support, children trapped in forced labor and to reunite them with their families. Child trafficking is a key focus of the UNICEF’s protection team. After the 2010 earthquake one of UNICEF's priorities was to maintain HIV services for women and children who were at an increasing risk of getting affected by HIV. It provided funds for training sessions to strengthen providers' skills and provide anti-retroviral drugs, HIV testing and counseling services.38
j) Girls’ Education Project focuses on getting students back to school in Nigeria

In Nigeria girls from poor families are forced to leave education. To help these girls attend schools, the Government of Nigeria, UNICEF and other partners have launched the Girls’ Education Project. The goals of the project are to get more children to school and reduce gender disparities in primary and secondary education. The project has had a head start with $50 million committed by the United Kingdom, and is quickly gaining momentum. Through this on Project, free learning materials have been distributed in more than 700 schools in northern Nigeria, lifting a big financial burden for poor families. The State government has also worked to give a comfortable learning environment by providing water pumps and separate latrines for boys and girls. Teachers too are given extra training which is beneficial for their development. Unfortunately even today there are still many girls in Nigeria who are unable to give their dreams a second chance.39

k) Ecuador begins to eradicate child labour

Ecuador’s government has addressed the growing problem of child labour in the country. In 2004, the Labour Ministry appointed teams of inspectors to monitor workplaces in 22 provinces around the country and has continued to strengthen its national surveillance system. With the support of UNICEF, the International Labour Organization, and local governments their teams make routine visits to places like farms and plantations where most child labour activity takes place. In accordance with the law, they are required to remove child under the age of fifteen from the workplace or any adolescent who works more than six hours a day. They are instructed to check the dangerous or unhealthy labour conditions under which children work. According to UNICEF, six percent of Ecuadorian children between the ages of five and 14 are still engaged in some form of child labour. The 1998 Constitution specifically calls for children in Ecuador to be protected in the workplace against economic exploitation, or conditions that may hamper a minor’s personal development or education. UNICEF is also working to create awareness in communities and to provide the type of support—education, health, parental guidance—that will prevent them from going back to work.
I) UNICEF in Bangladesh

The George Harrison Fund for UNICEF is a joint undertaking between the Harrison family and the U.S Fund for UNICEF to support UNICEF programs that provide lifesaving assistance to children, including health, education, nutrition and emergency relief. Sixty million children Bangladesh live in rural areas, but in the face of frequent natural disasters and the growing threat of climate change, rural livelihoods are tenuous. Increasing numbers of families are moving to vast urban slums to escape poverty. UNICEF has been working in Bangladesh for 60 years and the George Harrison family has been part of this work for 40 years. During that time, UNICEF provided emergency relief to thousands of war refugees and children caught in several of the world’s worst cyclones. Today, the Fund supports three different programs in Bangladesh

1) Protection of children from HIV/AIDS through community awareness, peer-to-peer training, prevention of Mother-to-Child transmission and support groups for women and youth living with HIV.

2) Community-based services to improve socio-economic conditions for women in children in the Chittagong Hill Tract to support basic health, education and hygiene services.

3) Emergency Response to respond to Cyclone and the humanitarian situation for children affected by the disaster. 41

m) UNICEF in Syria

For more than forty years UNICEF has been actively involved in Syria. Since 1971, it has provided assistance and advice to government and non-governmental organisations in designing and implementing plans for children and women. UNICEF’s Country Programme is the outcome of a participatory process at different levels. The Country Programme consists of three major components, all of which focus on ensuring that the rights of children and women are upheld. Apart from this there is also a programme which concentrates on Palestinian refugee children and women residing in refugee camps in Syria. 42
n) Programme To Improve Primary Education in Iraq

Since 1983 UNICEF has been working in Iraq to ensure that Iraqi children survive and realize their full potential. UNICEF has supported the Government of Iraq to develop child friendly policies, build the capacity of institutions to deliver essential services to children, and convene all duty bearers to realize the full rights of Iraqi children. Via a network of staff and partners, UNICEF's programmes continue to improve basic health services, safeguard a quality education, rebuild water and sanitation systems, protect children from abuse, violence, and exploitation, and meet the needs of the most vulnerable in situations of crisis. The European Union is contributing 17 million euro to improve access to quality basic education in Iraq. It has partnered with UNICEF and the Government of Iraq to develop new education policies, build the capacity of the government, and mobilize communities to increase enrolment of girls and boys in schools and help them complete their education. This programme is in line with the ongoing work to support the Government of Iraq to develop the National Education Strategy and to meet its education targets. By improving the overall quality of primary education as well as integrating hundreds of thousands of children and adolescents millions of children in Iraq will benefit with the skills which are necessary to escape poverty, give more job opportunities and build a stable and peaceful Iraq in the future.

o) UNICEF in Turkey

In Turkey, UNICEF has contributed to joint programmes on Gender Equality and HIV/AIDS. UNICEF consults the World Bank who gives UNICEF an opportunity to ensure that child rights are taken into consideration and children’s issues receive full attention. UNICEF works with many government and non-government partners to introduce several service models which contribute in providing protection to vulnerable children, including children in conflict with the law, and in adopting mechanisms to coordinate these services.

p) UNICEF in India

UNICEF has been working in India since 1949 advocating for the rights of children. It has been supporting the Government of India in its journey from Sarva Shikshan Abhiyan to Right to Free and compulsory Education. UNICEF India’s programmatic approach to child protection aims to build a protective environment in
which children can live and develop in the full respect of their fundamental rights. UNICEF Child Protection Programme in India focuses mainly on three areas of intervention namely child labour, child trafficking, and children in difficult circumstances. In the area of Child labour, projects implemented in various states of the country adopt an essentially holistic approach, combining strategies aimed not only to the withdrawal of children from work, but also to enhance communities’ awareness, ownership and collective action for the protection and promotion of children rights. In the area of child trafficking, UNICEF India supports the Government with a twofold strategy aimed to strengthen rescue mechanisms and at the same time reduce children’s vulnerability to trafficking through a special focus on preventive action. For this purpose, a National Communication Strategy on child trafficking has been developed and is now being implemented at community-level through UNICEF state offices. Manuals have been developed for social workers, judiciary and counselors who are working on issues of child trafficking in order to enable rescue and rehabilitation processes which are in the best interest of the child.

In its efforts to improve the implementation of the Juvenile Justice System in the country UNICEF is also supporting the government with the development of training materials for the Judiciary and various other functionaries of the system like the child welfare committee members, police and care-takers in the various institutions under the Act.

UNICEF is also collaborating with the Ministry of Women and Child Development on the creation of a website for Missing Children to facilitate tracing and reintegration of lost children to avoid being exposed to criminal activities, child labour and ensure basic education. UNICEF is concerned about the recent Union cabinet approval of the Juvenile Justice Act amendment to empower the Juvenile justice Board to decide whether a juvenile above the age of 16 years involved in a heinous crime to be tried in a regular court and working on finding a solution to this alarmingly growing problem. The UNICEF movement towards developing truly inclusive societies is already underway in many parts of the world. It is gaining strength from the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, from other international commitments such as Education for All and ‘A World Fit for Children’, and above all from the Convention on the Rights of the Child. With the necessary national and international commitment to establishing more just and inclusive societies, this momentum will decisively grow. Day by day, diversity is
coming to be understood as a resource and more and more children are being given the opportunity to contribute to the life of their family, community and country. The Indian laws have analysed and understood the various aspects of children’s rights in the light of different roles played by UNICEF globally.
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