

THREE BILLION REASONS

*“There is not just **one** reason for working to promote the well-being and rights of children and young people. There are three billion of them.”*

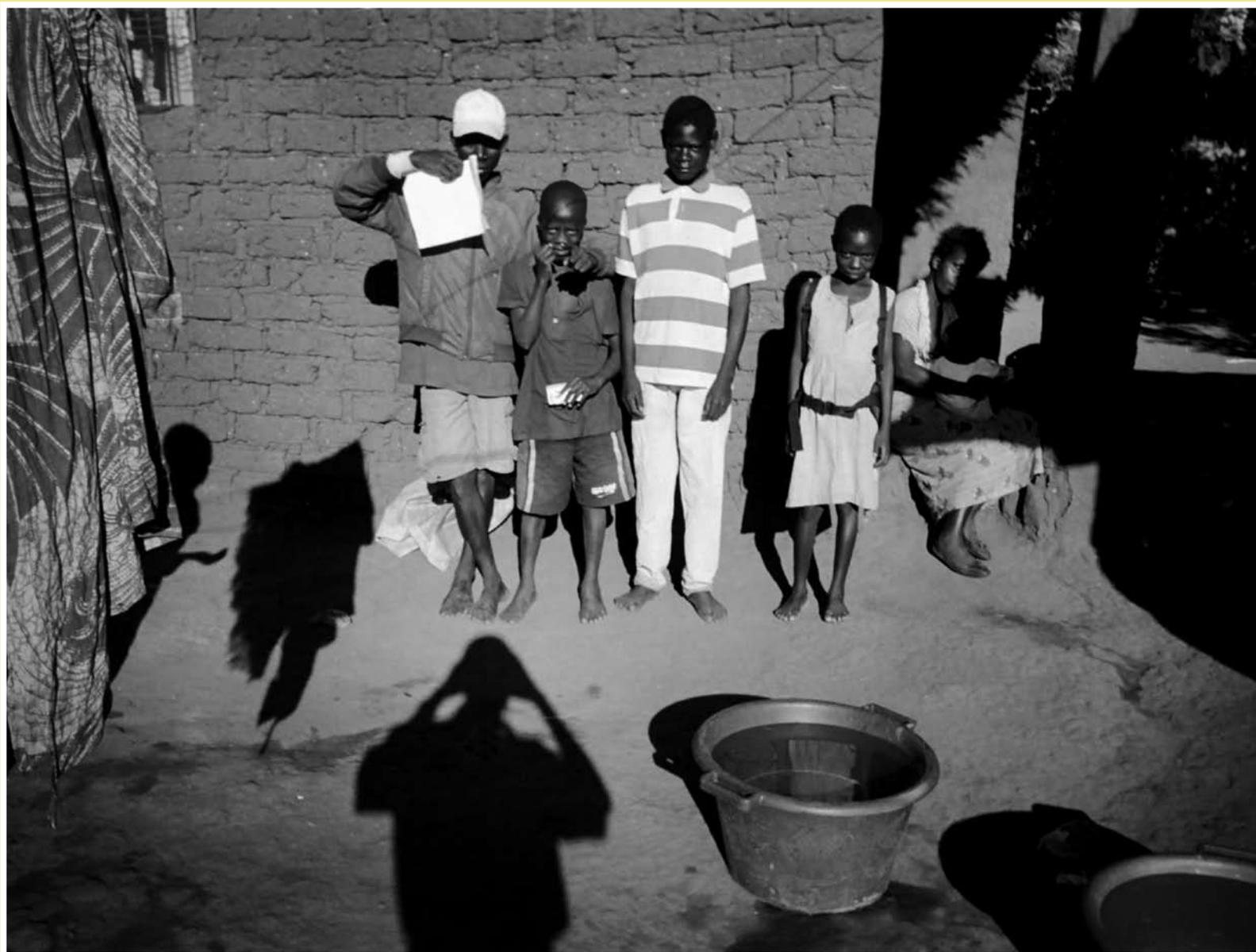
*Hilde F. Johnson,
Minister of International Development*

Norway's Development Strategy for Children and Young People in the South



BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.

- Peace Building – A development perspective (2004).
- Fighting Poverty Together – A coherent development policy (Report No. 35 to the Storting (2003-2004)).
- Debt Relief for Development – A Plan of Action (2004).
- Fighting Poverty through Agriculture – Norwegian Plan of Action for Agriculture in Development Policy (2004).
- Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children (2003).
- The Norwegian Government's International Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2003).
- Education for All. A Strategy for Education in the South (2002).
- Fighting Poverty – The Norwegian Government's Plan of Action for Combating Poverty in the South towards 2015 (2002).
- Strategy for Strengthening Research and Higher Education in the Context of Norway's Relations with Developing Countries (2000).
- A Plan for Persons with Disabilities in Development Cooperation (1999).
- A Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation 1997-2005 (1997).
To be updated in 2005.



Melya Mawindi

Schoolchildren from Norway's main partner countries have made an important contribution to this document. The photographs were taken by children from selected school classes who were given disposable cameras and asked to record their everyday lives. They took more than 6,000 photographs. As you can see, many of them are of excellent quality

”THREE BILLION REASONS”

NORWAY’S DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH

“There is not just **one** reason for working to promote the well-being and rights of children and young people. There are three billion of them.”

Hilde F. Johnson, Minister of International Development

Oslo, May 2005



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



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CONTENTS

This is the Norwegian Government's strategy for efforts to promote the rights and improve the living conditions of children and young people in the poor countries of the world. The strategy is intended to provide guidelines for Norway's work in this field up to 2015. It is also intended to be a reference document and a source of factual information about the situation of children. Since the authorities, non-governmental organisations and educational institutions in Norway's partner countries are also relevant target groups, this document has been published in Norwegian and English.



There has always been focus on the rights and welfare of children and young people in Norway's development co-operation, especially in the education and health sectors. However, the principles laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are not confined to isolated sectors. It has a holistic approach. Nor are rights realised without effort. In the perspective of children's rights, girls and boys are independent actors who must be given the opportunity to participate in the development of society. While previous strategies in this area have almost exclusively focused on early childhood, the aim of this strategy is also to facilitate an active role for young people in the 14-24 age group.

A children's rights-based approach entails more than meeting fundamental needs. The Convention on the Rights of the Child also states that children and young people must be given opportunities to be seen and heard, to be able to claim their rights themselves and do something about the causes of the lack of respect for their interests. A prerequisite for this is that both children and adults must be aware of their rights. Norway wishes to contribute to this.

The vulnerability of children and young people – in different ways and at different stages of childhood – is another main leitmotif of this strategy. A distinction is made between the general vulnerability of children and young people, vulnerable periods, and especially vulnerable groups and groups at risk. We do not regard vulnerability as a reason for stigmatisation. All people are vulnerable. However, children and young people are primarily resources rather than clients, even though poverty affects children far more severely than adults. Poverty is also inherited. If the poverty chain from one generation to the next is to be broken, resources and efforts must also be focused on the critical, vulnerable periods in the human life cycle. Early childhood and early adolescence are the most important of these periods.

Poverty not only affects children and adults in different ways. There are also major differences between the genders. It is girls who are the hardest hit. The gender perspective is therefore the third leitmotif of this strategy. The distribution of power in society determines the distribution of resources and gender roles. In some parts of the world, there are differences between boys and girls in terms of nutrition and care. This results in higher infant and child mortality rates for girls. The same applies to access to education, work and leisure and protection from armed

conflict and violence, not least in the form of sexual abuse. As a result of gender patterns, boys are more vulnerable to injury from violence, but they are also more often the perpetrators of the most extreme violence. We must do something about this. Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, all boys and girls have equal rights. We are a long way from achieving this. That is why Norway will focus its efforts particularly on eliminating this unfair difference.

This strategy is intended to be a guide to action. The aim is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. This document indicates the course, which will be operationalised through separate long-term plans and action plans. The starting point will be a baseline study conducted in 2005, which will identify where Norway stands – alone and with others – in its development co-operation efforts for children and young people.

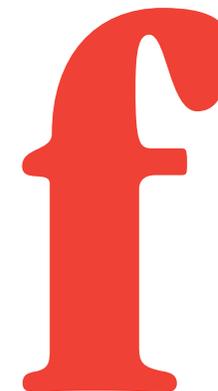
Although the Strategy for Children and Young People is the Government's strategy, non-governmental organisations, research institutions and relevant Norwegian ministries have participated actively in developing it. Children and young people in our main partner countries have contributed photographic accounts of their everyday lives. We also recall the statements of children and young people at the Children's Summit in 2002. This strategy gives Norway a new starting point for dialogue and co-operation.



The most important thing of all is that we now have a better chance than ever before of preventing the history of poverty from repeating itself. We are starting a new chapter with the children.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Hilde F. Johnson'.

*Hilde F. Johnson
Minister of International
Development*



FOREWORD



This strategy was drawn up on the basis of the UN Millennium Development Goals. Alongside the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recommendations from the Children's Summit in New York in 2002 (A World Fit for Children), the eight Millennium Development Goals, almost all of which focus on the situation of children and young people, provide the basis for this strategy and for Norway's future development efforts in this area.

Like the UN, we have a ten-year perspective, up to 2015. However, time is short and the challenges are great: today almost half the world's population already consists of children and young people under the age of 24. Half of the more than one billion people in developing countries who, according to the UN, are living on less than a dollar a day, are children. This is a strategy for both children and young people, which means that it primarily concerns the 0-24 age-group. ¹⁾

It is a matter of more equitable distribution

The rights perspective is the mainstay of the white paper Report No. 35 to the Storting Fighting Poverty Together. On the basis of universal human rights, our common fight has to do with changing the distribution of resources and influence, globally, nationally and locally, to the benefit of the poorest people. It focuses on the conditions that create and re-create poverty. According to the white paper, there are four especially important arenas for Norway's efforts:

- in the global arena, to improve the international framework conditions for developing countries, such as market access, debt relief, etc.;
- among donors, to increase development assistance and improve the effectiveness and impact of our contributions;
- in recipient countries, to improve governance and distribution;
- in co-operation with non-governmental actors, to mobilise civil society and the private sector.

Reforms in these arenas will also have a decisive impact on the living conditions of children and young people. It is a matter of achieving more equitable distribution. It is a matter of rights: all children and young people have the same rights, regardless of where in the world they live.

¹⁾ The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines as children all human beings under the age of 18, unless the relevant national laws recognise an earlier age of majority. The UN generally uses the term "adolescent" for the age range 10-19, "young people" for those aged 10-24 and "youth" for those aged 15-24.

The children's rights perspective (rights-based assistance) – a leitmotif

The Strategy for Children and Young People is divided into four parts:

- a descriptive part: what is the current situation of children and young people?
- an analytical part: why is this so?
- an action-oriented part: what will Norway do?
- a conclusion

The first chapter describes the background for this strategy: children as social actors from a human rights perspective, the general vulnerability of children and young people, especially vulnerable periods, critically vulnerable groups and groups at risk. The gender perspective is also an important leitmotif in this strategy. Poverty affects boys and girls differently as a result of the distribution of power in society. This is reflected in gender discrimination and different traditional roles and rights. Girls are generally more vulnerable than boys. But boys are also discriminated against, for instance by being conscripted into armies. The articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child that are particularly relevant to the various parts of this strategy are cited in the text. The factors that affect the situation of children and young people in poor countries today are then presented on the basis of the Millennium Development Goals. Some of the global, national and local factors that contribute to poverty among children and young people are analysed in chapter 3. In the following chapters, we focus on four areas that will be especially important for Norway's development efforts in the years ahead. They are:

- the right of children and young people to development, with focus on education;
- the right of children and young people to survival, with focus on health;
- the right of children and young people to protection;
- the right of children and young people to participation.



INTRODUCTION

Ten priorities

For each area, we present a number of conclusions as to what Norway intends to do. Finally, in Chapter 9, we summarise the main guidelines, focusing on how the strategy can be implemented. The Norwegian Government will give special priority to the following areas:

1. Strengthening the rights-based approach in accordance with the other principles of Norwegian development co-operation;
2. Strengthening the participation of children and young people through mobilisation, leadership training and organisational development;
3. Focusing more strongly on human rights education, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
4. Giving priority to critically vulnerable groups of children and young people and groups at risk;
5. Focusing on early childhood and adolescence through integrated approaches to promote the best possible start in life. (Millennium Development Goal No. 1);
6. Helping to ensure that all girls and boys complete a full course of good quality primary schooling (Millennium Development Goal No. 2);
7. Giving priority to the rights and living conditions of girls and young women, with special emphasis on promoting gender equality (Millennium Development Goal No. 3);
8. Protecting all children from death, disease and disability, among other things by providing better infant care, vaccination and access to clean drinking water; rational treatment of diseases and prenatal care for young pregnant girls (Millennium Development Goals Nos. 4 and 5);
9. Preventing and halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and helping to ensure that infected children, young people and orphans receive the care they need (Millennium Development Goal No. 6);
10. Through a holistic development policy, contributing to sustainable development, among other things by promoting more equitable international framework conditions ((Millennium Development Goals Nos. 7 and 8).

If a strategy is to be meaningful, its priorities must be enforced. We will therefore establish an ambassadorship for development work on children and young people, a network in the development co-operation administration comprising people who are responsible for this field, and a checklist that must be used in connection with all issues relating to the rights and well-being of children and young people. Thus there will be people who are specifically responsible for implementation of this strategy in Norwegian development co-operation.

Children, young people and the Millennium Development Goals

Focusing on children and young people is the most direct way of influencing the basis for long-term development. It is an investment that brings the maximum return, in both human and financial terms. If these efforts are co-ordinated with partner countries and other development stakeholders and integrated with their efforts, Norway will be able to help create a dynamic force for change. Poverty, violence, discrimination and unsuccessful development will be combated on a broad front.

This strategy paves the way for change, i.e. for an approach that identifies the most important agents of change and activities to support local, national and global measures as part of a process towards 2015. The choice of agents of change must be viewed in the light of the principle of non-discrimination. Prevailing power structures in the family and in society must often be challenged so that the groups that are most excluded can gain influence. The use of resources and measures will be evaluated on a continuous basis and the lessons that are learned will be incorporated into future planning as the framework conditions change.

This strategy focuses on some of Norway's priorities and measures, and indicates tools that may help to ensure that the rights of children and young people are safeguarded more effectively. We wish to help intensify the process so that the Millennium Development Goals can be achieved by 2015. We regard children and young people as the most important tool and the most vital resource for achieving this.



Kevin Ramos

The causes of poverty

The Norwegian Government's Action Plan for Combating Poverty in the South towards 2015 summarises the causes of poverty as follows:

The causes of poverty vary from country to country and region to region, and can only be understood in the light of specific historical and cultural factors. However, some important general causes can be identified:

- An increase in the population due to significantly improved health services without an equivalent fall in the high birth rate.
 - National political systems and government institutions that are too weak to steer the country's economic and social policies in a positive direction.
 - Undemocratic systems, which tend to be authoritarian, corrupt and dominated by an elite that controls public and private funds.
 - Political unrest and war.
 - Severe pressure on and poor management of the natural environment, leading to depletion of natural resources and environmental degradation.
 - Poor framework conditions for viable markets. This includes a lack of efficient taxation systems, legislation and a properly functioning legal system, as well as weak individual property rights, little opportunity for people to realise their potential, a poorly developed finance sector and weak public control bodies.
- Insufficient investment in health and primary education, resulting in a poor basis for ensuring both personal income and national economic development. Moreover, diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB are now so widespread in a number of poor countries that they threaten the whole development process. In many countries, women have even less access to education, even though studies show that the education of women is often one of the most important input factors in the fight against poverty.
 - Poorly developed infrastructure such as roads, electricity supply and telecommunications, which leads to high production costs, competitive disadvantages and great vulnerability to increases in the price of imported energy.
 - Low productivity in the agricultural sector, low prices for agricultural products and a poorly developed market system for selling surplus agricultural production. Many poor people do not own the land they work, which prevents them from being secure, independent and able to take up credit for investments. Women are particularly vulnerable.

People are poor because they do not have power or influence.



1

CHAPTER 1 THREE APPROACHES

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted in 1989 and entered into force in September 1990, marked an important breakthrough for children's rights. It is the human rights convention that has the greatest support, having been ratified by 192 countries. However, many countries have reservations, some of which are extensive. The Convention emphasises states' responsibility for respecting and safeguarding the rights laid down in the Convention for all individuals within their territory or jurisdiction.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines everyone under the age of 18 as a child (Article 1). The Convention emphasises that children need "special protective measures" and special care from both authorities and individuals, including their parents and other carers, as well as teachers and employers. It explains in greater detail than other treaties what such protection entails in a human rights context. Two optional protocols – on limiting the participation of children in armed conflicts and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography – were adopted on 12 February and 18 January 2002 respectively.

Several of the principles laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are important for the Government's strategy. They include the following:

The principle of non-discrimination (Article 2)

The first principle, non-discrimination (Article 2), means that the rights of all children and young people must be safeguarded without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of factors such as the child's gender, ethnicity, disability, national origin or refugee status. Non-discrimination and equality entail two types of obligation:

- a negative obligation to refrain from unreasonable discrimination on the grounds of the above-named factors;
- a positive obligation to undertake special measures to rectify inequalities.

The principle of the best interests of the child (Article 3)

One of the overarching principles of the Convention is that the primary consideration must be the best interests of the child in connection with all measures and actions by public authorities that affect children. This principle also applies to private actors, such as companies or non-governmental organisations that are involved in development co-operation.

The right to participate and be heard (Article 12)

The third fundamental principle concerns the child's right to express its views on matters that concern it, i.e. the right to be heard, cf. Article 12. Weight must be given to these views according to the child's age and maturity.

The right to life, survival and development (Articles 4 and 6)

By ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the state is responsible for guaranteeing that the basic needs of all children will be met to the maximum extent of the available resources.

The provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are universal minimum standards, although they may be subject to national adjustments. Different cultures, religions and other philosophies of life hold differing views about who children and young people are and about the relationship between children and adults. There are also major differences as regards the place of children in the production system, and as regards the rights and duties of parents and young people's duties to the community and local customs (Article 5).

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child was established to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, among other things through its processing of reports from states parties. The first report must be presented within two years after the Convention entered into force in the state concerned and every five years thereafter. From 2004 onwards, the Committee will also monitor the implementation of the optional protocols by the states parties that have ratified them. Entities other than countries may also submit supplementary information to the Committee. Coalitions of NGOs often submit alternative or supplementary reports to the governmental reports.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the only human rights convention that has been ratified by all Norway's main partner and partner countries. Only two countries in the world – the USA and Somalia – have not ratified it. The Convention provides a basic foundation for Norway's international work on human rights. On the basis of the common norms it contains, political dialogue can be established with all Norway's partner countries concerning children's rights, and alliances can be formed with civil society and private organisations.

Article 2 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: *States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.*

The first approach: the rights of the child in development co-operation

State authorities are responsible for protecting, promoting, respecting and realising human rights through legislative, administrative and other measures and through international co-operation. By acceding to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, states parties have taken upon themselves the responsibility for ensuring that the special rights of children and young people are fulfilled. The state is responsible for all the agencies and persons that act on its behalf, from legislator, government and courts of law to the individual bureaucrat, soldier or policeman. The state is also responsible for ensuring that private actors respect these rights in their work.

Children and young people also have special rights. A children's rights-based approach means, among other things, that children, often with adults, must be ensured the opportunity to learn about their rights so that they can stand up for themselves and claim them.

A rights-based approach is not primarily a matter of meeting fundamental needs, but of improving the possibilities for demanding that human rights be realised. To a certain extent, a rights-based approach therefore means strengthening the organisation and mobilisation of vulnerable and

impoverished groups so that they can deal with the people in power in their society.

Using a children's rights-based approach in development co-operation therefore means:

- recognising children as rights-holders and social actors;
- holding states and government agencies in all countries responsible for fulfilling the rights of children and young people;
- recognising that parents and families are primarily carers, protectors and guides – and supporting them in these roles;
- giving priority to children and a good childhood environment;
- taking the gender perspective into account.

A children's rights-based approach is no guarantee of positive development for children and young people. The population's awareness of human rights is extremely limited in many countries. Government authorities are responsible for fulfilling their countries' human rights obligations, but they cannot be forced to act in the absence of political will. Development co-operation can strengthen capacity, but political will must also be present. If a rights-based approach is applied, this may mark the beginning of a process of change characterised by conscious, active participation.

Other relevant conventions:

ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1973).

ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1993).

ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (African Union).

Other UN instruments and mechanisms:

Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, first established by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1990.

UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (1996), first appointed in 1996.

Studies:

Study by Graca Machel – The Impact of Violent Conflict on Children (1996).

Study by Paulo Sergio Pinheiro – Violence against Children (begun in 2003).

The UN Special Session on Children

The UN Special Session on Children was held in 2002 to report on what had been achieved in the past decade and to draw up another joint action plan for the period up to 2015. 180 countries backed the joint declaration and plan of action entitled A World Fit for Children.

The final document from the UN Special Session on Children contains 21 goals for the health, education and protection of children and thus incorporates the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: *States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation.*

Checklist

In this strategy, we launch a simple checklist as a basis for assessing the extent to which the interests of children and young people are taken into account in Norwegian development co-operation. This list must be used by Norway's representatives in negotiations on country programmes, in development policy dialogue with partner countries and at international negotiations on development policy issues. All relevant decision documents must show whether the list has been used. The purpose of this is to ensure that the target group, children and young people, is not forgotten and that Norway is more consistent and strategic in its efforts to promote the rights of the child.

There are many agendas, arenas and stakeholders in efforts to promote the rights and well-being of children and young people. Report No. 35 to the Storting (2003-2004): Fighting Poverty Together and the present strategy can only provide an overarching direction for these efforts. In this document, we therefore propose carrying out analyses to show which agents of change and activities for children and young people are and may be the most important in Norway's partner countries and at the multilateral level. This will take place on the basis of studies of their situation. One of the main challenges will be to co-ordinate the efforts of governments, civil society and international donors.

The checklist may be found in Appendix, page 58.

The second approach: the vulnerability of children and young people

In its strategy "Investing in Children and Youth" (draft 2004), the World Bank points out that financial investments are essential to reduce poverty and promote human development, especially in the least developed countries, where children and young people account for a large proportion of the population. The needs of many children and young people, in terms of nutrition, health, education and other areas related to development, are not being met. If the poverty chain from one generation to the next is to be broken, efforts must be focused on the critical, vulnerable periods in the life cycle of impoverished people. The risks are not evenly distributed throughout life; they are especially high during pregnancy and childbirth, and in early adolescence. The damage done during these periods may exacerbate the negative consequences later on in life. Norway wishes to focus its preventive efforts on these periods in particular.

Some children are critically vulnerable and at risk due to permanent threats to their physical and psychological integrity. According to the World Bank, reducing the vulnerability of children and young people through preventive efforts results in high financial and social returns and has a direct poverty-reducing effect.

Economists have calculated the costs of a low birth weight. According to the World Bank, if the birth weight increases sufficiently, substantial sums of money can be saved as a result of reduced health costs and increased productivity. On a global basis, it has been calculated that the average saving may amount to approximately USD 580 per baby. This amount is higher than the annual per capita income in fifty of the poorest countries in the world.

Planning effective development measures for children and young people requires knowledge of the factors that affect the decisions of parents, family members, society and the young people themselves. Resources are limited and it is necessary to consider which age-groups we should concentrate on to achieve maximum effects. The focus of this strategy is therefore not only on children's vulnerable periods, vulnerable groups and groups at risk, but also on the connections between them. They may vary from one society to the next. We therefore need more knowledge and insight, which this strategy aims to acquire.

Very many of the measures that currently target children and young people often focus on individual sectors, individual institutions or individual projects. A more coherent overview and approach to the causes will, however, provide a better basis for sustainable change. This does not mean that Norway must provide financial assistance for all sectors relevant to children. The starting point must be that we, as one actor among many donor countries and in our contacts with the authorities of our partner countries, promote this kind of holistic, preventive and proactive approach, which will enable more development actors to co-ordinate their work for children and young people through overarching plans for poverty reduction, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) linked to the Millennium Development Goals. It is through overarching distribution policy that the most important measures for the development of children and young people must be taken.

Norway strongly emphasises the importance of integrating consideration for the child into general development co-operation as expressed in existing strategies and action plans.

The third approach: the gender perspective – the special situation of girls

UNICEF has described the last decade (1990-2000) as “a decade of undeclared war on women and children”. Prejudice, discrimination and cruelty to girls takes many forms, some of which have existed for centuries while others are products of our own era. For example, girls are more often the victims of violence and genital mutilation than boys. They are more frequently excluded from education and health services, and prevented from playing an active role in the local community. They grow up in poverty, are sold into sexual slavery, are forced to perform a disproportionate number of duties and are deprived of the right to their own bodies. The number of girls who are married off and become mothers when they are still children is alarming. We also know that female infanticide is widespread in some parts of the world, both before and after birth.

Promoting the rights and well-being of girls is therefore a central, recurrent theme and a priority in this strategy. This entails greater awareness of the situation of girls. At the same time, we must ensure that the problems of girls and their solution are to a greater extent defined and promoted

by the girls themselves. Girls have different needs and interests than other family members. It is the right of girls to have explicit attention paid to their needs.

The gender perspective entails focus on relations between boys and girls, men and women. The existing power structures in society must be analysed and taken into account prior to any activity intended to strengthen the status of girls. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) is highly relevant in this context. It imposes clear obligations on governments and may be used as a supplement to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. CEDAW has been ratified by all Norway's partner countries with the exception of the Palestinian Area.

Orphans and vulnerable children (OVC)

In the course of their lives, all children and young people are vulnerable and at risk. However, compared with the “average” in their own societies, some are more vulnerable than others. Critically vulnerable children are children whose safety, well-being and development are under threat for various reasons. The most important factors that cause such vulnerability are the lack of care and love, adequate housing, education, nutrition and mental support.

Across different socio-cultural, economic and national contexts, the category “orphans and critically vulnerable children” may include abandoned children, street children, disabled

children, child soldiers, children affected by war, children exposed to hazardous work, children with substance abuse problems, children who are the victims of trafficking and various types of abuse and neglect, and children living in extreme poverty. A child belongs in many such categories at the same time.

The number of critically vulnerable children is growing, especially due to HIV and AIDS. Estimates show that in sub-Saharan Africa there were 34 million orphans in 2001. Eleven million of these children lost their parents because of AIDS. In many countries, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has not yet reached its peak. The number of children who will be affected by this disease is expected to rise. The negative impact of HIV/AIDS on children, households

and society will continue for decades after the epidemic begins to decline. Although there is a great deal of discussion about the number of people who will potentially be infected by HIV/AIDS, it is more important to understand the vulnerability and risk patterns that will face vulnerable groups of children. Unless we understand them, we cannot identify the children that need help or the measures necessary to meet their needs.

Source: Investing in Children and Youth. The World Bank (draft 2004)

WHAT WILL NORWAY DO?

- Promote a coherent approach to the rights of the child.
- Prioritise early childhood and adolescence, critically vulnerable groups and groups at risk.
- Prioritise girls and young women, with special emphasis on education, health services and reproductive rights.
- Increase knowledge and understanding of the causes of the situation and roles of children and young people. Priority must be given to the knowledge, views and participation of children.
- Identify agents of change and activities among children and young people in the countries and societies with which Norway cooperates.
- Promote the influence of children and young people, among other things by organising children and young people in civil society. We must facilitate dialogue and meeting places for agents of change, both in civil society and in government.
- Strengthen the ability of the family or household and local community to invest in children and young people.

- Help ensure that overarching distribution policy is, to a greater extent, focused on factors that affect the investment of the family/household and the local community in children, and that obstacles to the employment and participation in social life of young people are eliminated.
- Promote the use of a checklist for the rights of children and young people in connection with the planning and approval of new development projects, negotiations on country programmes, development policy dialogue and participation in international organisations and meetings on development policy.



Azizul Alomger



Inequality – an obstacle to equitable distribution

Global poverty is the basis and the challenge for this development strategy for children and young people in the South. Perhaps it affects this group most severely of all. There is enormous inequality between countries, within countries and within households. In some of the least developed countries, it is six times more likely that a child in the poorest third of the population will die before it reaches the age of five than a child in the richest 10 per cent. Poverty also leads to greater risks for infants, girls, disabled children, etc. within families. These inequalities are unfair, they generate more poverty and they lead to a less secure world. The causes of poverty are discussed on the Government's Action Plan: Fighting Poverty Together (2002). *They are summarised in the box on page 11.*

In this chapter, we will discuss some of the factors that will have a decisive impact on how inequality in the world develops and the consequences this may have for the future of children and young people.

Globalisation

The UN World Youth Report for 2003 points out that children and young people today are participating in a development process that is bringing people closer together, but is also strengthening the economic and cultural gaps between them. The report speaks of an ambiguous relationship between globalisation and youth, in the form of benefits and opportunities on the one hand and substantial social costs that can have a disproportionate impact on children and young people on the other.

Although children and young people are not without influence and power, their economic situation is such that they are more vulnerable to economic and cultural globalisation than any other group. Children and young people are citizens and consumers in a global culture while at the same time they are working to be accepted and heard in the societies in which they live.

Children and young people in both rich and poor countries may be marginalized as a result of their lack of economic power; their lack of legal status and economic and social inequality. For many of them, growing "into" existing, often repressive structures is a major problem. Globalisation processes bring opportunities, but as a result of inequality, one young person's opportunity may quickly become another's obstacle. In the years

ahead, the effects of globalisation will be assessed in relation to the degree to which young people are assimilated into social, economic and cultural processes of change in the world.

International agreements – to the benefit of children and young people

International policies also affect children and young people. This applies to international agreements that regulate access to, the price of and licences to produce medicines and vaccines, that limit the marketing of tobacco (Framework Convention on Tobacco) or that remove obstacles and thereby open new markets for international alcoholic beverages. They have direct consequences for children's and young people's possibilities for survival and development. Agreements that regulate trade and customs barriers affect people's living conditions and public revenues. Norway will make efforts to ensure that the effects of international agreements are evaluated in relation to children and young people, and that such agreements are increasingly in accordance with the overarching goal of investing in children and young people in order to combat poverty and promote equality.

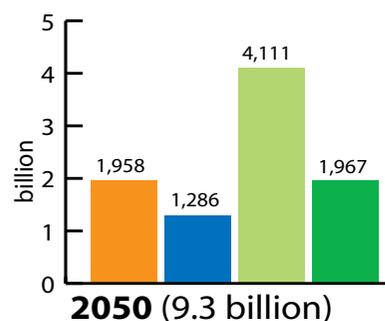
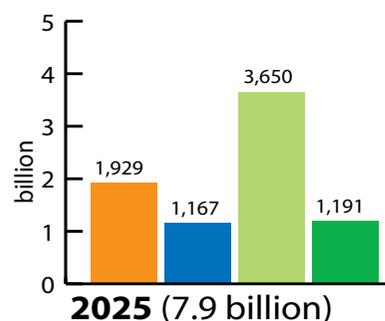
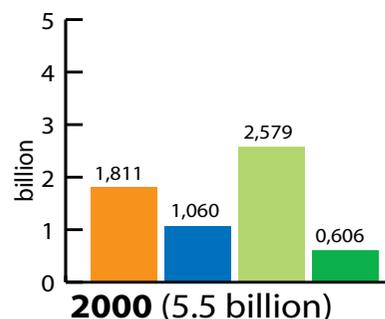
The HIPC Initiative and poverty reduction strategies

Debt relief, economic policies and the use of public resources have a direct impact on the material well-being, survival, health, education, development and social participation of children and young people. Debt relief is an important means of ensuring that priority is given to the interests of children and young people. Debt relief through the HIPC Initiative is tied to poverty reduction strategies. It frees up funds that would have been spent on servicing debt for economic development, and ensures that more funds are spent on social sectors such as health and education. For the 27 countries that have so far been granted debt relief under the HIPC Initiative, the World Bank has calculated that expenditure on poverty-reducing measures (especially health and education) in 2002 was almost four times as great as expenditure on interest and debt repayment. In 1999, the ratio was at best one to one. An economic policy that also makes it easier for poor people to participate in growth processes will increase their ability to meet the needs of children and young people. This means that poor people will have better market access, be better able to realise their assets and have better possibilities for earning a living. The future opportunities for children and young people will be improved by more equitable international framework conditions. On the basis of the document Debt

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CHAPTER 2 FACTORS THAT AFFECT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Distribution of world population according to age



- < 15 years old
- 15-24 years old
- 25-59 years old
- >60 years old

Source: United Nations Population Division. World population prospects 2002 update, available at <http://www.unpopulation.org>

Relief for Development: A Plan of Action (2004) Norway also plans to intensify debt relief measures for countries in various transitional phases following a war.

Norway will make efforts to ensure that the national poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) that are formulated in future focus more strongly on the rights and welfare of children and young people, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which these countries have ratified. These strategy papers should therefore set out a policy that promotes children's interests. It should be based on participatory processes, organised by the authorities, in which young people are heard. The same applies to sector programmes and budget support. Budgetary priorities play a decisive role in determining whether children and young people have access to important health and education services.

The urbanisation of poverty

Almost half the world's population is currently under 25 years of age. Approximately one fifth are adolescents aged 10-19. Almost 30 per cent are under 10 years of age. 87 per cent of them live in developing countries and an increasing number live in the towns. The urbanisation of poverty is a trend that has accelerated in recent decades. In 20 years, 60 per cent of the world's population will live in towns, and most of them will live in slum areas. The possibilities for education and employment in urban areas are leading to growing urbanisation. Health services are also better and closer in the towns. In the children's intervention at the second UN Conference on Human Settlement in Istanbul in 1996 they emphasised that it was especially necessary to meet the need for clean water, good sanitation and electricity, and to reduce the fear of violence and the feeling of insecurity.

Orphans and especially vulnerable groups of children usually drift into towns or urban areas. In the absence of adult carers, many of them end up on the streets. For others, living on the street becomes a lifestyle that they have accepted more or less voluntarily. Due to problems at school and a difficult family situation, many of them become social dropouts. A life of crime, drugs and prostitution is often the only alternative. In some countries, many of the street children are demobilised child soldiers. Without help to deal with their experiences and return to society, they often end up living a life of violence and crime, not least because they have often had access to guns, which they have become used to using to get what they want.

However, it is easy to see only the problems. Especially vulnerable groups also represent enormous possibilities for positive social change. Giving them opportunities to utilise their ingenuity, energy and courage in a positive way could make a significant contribution to social development. Through non-governmental organisations and local authorities, Norway will increasingly support efforts to help young people at risk to organise themselves and influence local and national authorities so that they gain access to basic services, such as health care, care, security, education and employment. The UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) is currently working to establish "One Stop Centres" in five African cities to meet the needs of children and young people living in slum areas. These are initiatives that Norway supports.

Unemployment

The transition from childhood to adulthood is a vulnerable phase. In poor countries with extensive and growing unemployment, this transition becomes critical for many young people. Impoverished young people in the cities appear to be especially at risk. Of the approximately one billion slum-dwellers in the world today, 40 per cent are below the age of 18. Orphans and especially vulnerable groups often gather here and have little or no access to education or vocational training. They are victims of social exclusion and are especially vulnerable to crime, drugs, prostitution and HIV/AIDS. In 2004 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) published figures showing that young people between the ages of 15 and 24 now account for half of the unemployed people in the world. In the past decade, the number of unemployed young people increased by 10.5 per cent while unemployment rose by only 0.2 per cent.

Young women are especially vulnerable. In the Middle East, North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the unemployment rate is twice as high for women as it is for men. The solution is often found in the informal sector, where many small trades and services flourish. Government authorities often focus on the supply side of the labour market instead of the demand side. There is uniform emphasis on "upgrading" qualifications instead of facilitating economic growth and employment that is adapted to the skills and interests of young people. In developing countries, vocational training is especially important, not least in places where there is high unemployment. This is an area to which Norway will give higher priority in its development co-operation.

HIV/AIDS

This pandemic is the Black Death of our time. In the worst affected countries in Southern Africa, it has significantly reversed development. In Asia and Eastern Europe the spread of the disease has only just begun. Children are affected by HIV/AIDS in many different ways. Even if a child is not infected itself, it is affected by the effects of the disease on the family and the community. Today, women account for half of the 40 million people in the world who are infected with HIV. The “feminisation” of the epidemic is especially clear in sub-Saharan Africa, where 60 per cent HIV- infected people are women. 75 per cent of the young people who are infected with the disease are girls in the 15-24 age group. They are 2.5 times more vulnerable to infection than boys and men. This is mainly because girls have too little knowledge about the epidemic, do not have sufficient access to information and health services relating to sexuality and reproductive health, are in a weak position to “negotiate” safer sex due to gender discrimination and the unequal distribution of power, and lack access to methods to prevent HIV infection that they can control themselves. The ABC motto (abstain, be faithful, use a condom) recurs in many HIV prevention programmes. However, in places where rape and other forms of sexual abuse are widespread, abstinence and insistence on using a condom are unrealistic. The high infection rate among young married women in Africa also shows that the ABC strategy must be supplemented. In all channels for international development co-operation and in close co-operation with national authorities and non-governmental organisations, it is essential to work systematically to prevent various types of sexual violence and promote greater equality between boys and girls.

HIV/AIDS has a far-reaching impact on responsibility in the home. When their parents are ill, children struggle each day to take over the adults' responsibility for housework or care of the family, often with the result that they are no longer able to attend school. Sixteen million children are orphans, and many of them are responsible for their siblings. Sometimes relatives, especially grandparents, may take care of them, but often under extremely difficult conditions. The loss of care and security experienced by children in families affected by HIV/AIDS has serious consequences for their later lives.

HIV/AIDS can also have a dramatic impact on the family income. Infected persons sooner or later become unable to work and have to face growing medical expenses. The cost of drugs and funerals is also a major strain on

the family economy. Suddenly there is no longer enough money to pay for food or children's school fees. There is considerable danger of social stigmatisation, which also inhibits the lives of children and young people.

The extent of the epidemic will often determine the ability of the local community to provide assistance. Health and education services are seriously depleted when nurses and teachers fall victim to HIV/AIDS. The number of teachers who died of HIV/AIDS in Zambia in 1998 was equivalent to two thirds of newly trained teachers the same year. Factors such as these have direct consequences for access to education. In a recent report (2004) OXFAM showed that the probability of contracting HIV is only half as great among children who complete their primary education as among children who do not. If all the children in the world could complete their primary education, it would be possible to avoid seven million cases of HIV in the next ten years. Education is one of the most important “vaccines” against HIV and against the development crisis caused by this epidemic.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

ICT is regarded as being one of the most important forces driving globalisation processes. The concept of “the digital gap” has arisen in this connection. This term is used in at least three ways: the unequal access to ICT of people in developed and developing countries, the unequal access to ICT between people within a country due to their financial situation, education, place of residence, etc. and, last but not least; the unequal possibilities for participation through ICT. The latter factor is especially important for the participation of children and young people in democratic processes. Children and young people have traditionally had limited opportunities to state their opinions. The digital revolution opens doors to more communication and participation. However, many young people experience a conflict between life in global cyberspace and the local culture in which they live.

ICT is not a magic wand that will solve unemployment or social exclusion problems in the immediate future. It will be a long time before everyone has access to this technology. Fairer distribution mechanisms are also a prerequisite for influencing this situation. But there is reason to be cautiously optimistic. Children and young people are innovative and, more than most people, will be able to utilise this technology to their own and other people's advantage.

Graca Machel from Mozambique, who headed work on the UN study of the impact of violent conflict on children, recently pointed out that today's trafficking in children is comparable to classic slavery, but in a new guise. It has developed new dimensions, become more sophisticated, taken on new forms and reached new heights. However, the objective is the same: to make a few people rich by violating other people's most fundamental rights and, in this particular context, the rights of the child. This destructive activity is currently regarded as being one of the most lucrative illegal ways of earning money in the world, alongside trafficking in drugs, weapons and women.

Human trafficking

The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises the right of the child to protection from financial exploitation. An optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography was adopted in 2000. The Convention contains rules concerning work that may be hazardous or an obstacle to a child's education, or may damage a child's health or its physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. One of the optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child deals with the widespread practice of sex tourism and states that some especially vulnerable groups, especially girls, are in greater danger of sexual exploitation than others. The protocol also deals with the dissemination of child pornography on the Internet. It advocates a more holistic approach that focuses on contributory factors, such as underdevelopment, poverty, economic imbalances, inequitable socio-economic structures, difficult family situations, lack of education, migration between urban and rural areas, gender discrimination, irresponsible adult sexual behaviour, harmful traditional practices, armed conflicts and trafficking in children.

The Government has adopted a Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children (2003), which contains a number of measures for prevention, control and treatment.

Natural disasters

Natural disasters have the strongest impact on children and young people. Recent examples are the Bam earthquake in December 2003 and the tsunami disaster that affected ten South Asian and South-East Asian countries around the Indian Ocean one year later. Thousands of children were killed as a result of these events, millions became orphans or separated from their families, and the victims of disease, hunger and exploitation. In situations where they are placed in temporary centres with no adults to look after them, they may be excluded from life-saving vaccines, food and drink, and become victims of human trafficking and sexual abuse.

Experience shows that if special attention is not paid to protecting children early on in the emergency relief phase, their difficult situation is often exacerbated. All humanitarian campaigns must therefore include child protection experts. It is especially important to involve the country's own experts. Measures must be implemented to keep families together;

which includes making sure that children are not dropped off in reception centres because their parents believe they will have a better life there. It is essential to ensure that measures are taken to identify children who are alone and searching for family members at an early stage. Children and young people need to be with people they know, and to feel as safe as possible. Relevant activation of children and young people through school, play, sport and participation in the planning and implementation of rehabilitation and reconstruction activities will also help to give them a new meaning in life.

WHAT WILL NORWAY DO?

Today, international development co-operation for children and young people consists of far more than development aid. The arenas, forums, channels, actors and forms for Norwegian efforts are many. As may be seen from this chapter, it is especially important to strengthen the “voice” and participation of children and young people, as laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Thus the perspective of children’s and young people’s rights is crucial, on a broad front and at all levels.

At the international level, Norway will safeguard the rights of children and young people in international negotiations, whether they concern the information society, peace, the repatriation of refugees or other matters. Norway will put the interests of children high on the agenda of international financial institutions, such as the World Bank. Assistance provided through the UN system will continue to have high priority, alongside standard-setting efforts.

It is also a matter of involving children and young people more directly in international processes and forums. In the following chapters we will explain in more detail what Norway intends to do at national and local levels.

Civil society, which includes non-governmental organisations, has played and will increasingly play a role as a promoter of children’s and young people’s rights by giving them a voice. Several Norwegian NGOs are acquiring more and specialised expertise in the field of children and the rights of the child. Redd Barna (Save the Children Norway) is a leading light in this respect. The Government will give priority to close dialogue with these organisations in connection with the follow-up to this strategy, and they will continue to be an important channel for assistance for activities in this area.



Victor Rene Quiroa

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The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises the right of all children to education. Education is a right in itself and not merely a means of achieving other goals. A children's rights-based approach to education must focus on the right of the child to receive from the country in which it lives the educational services laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. From a donor perspective, it will therefore be natural to enhance the capacity of countries to fulfil these rights, especially by focusing on legislation and guidelines, curriculum development, teacher training, financing, etc. Countries that have ratified the Convention have committed themselves to making primary education compulsory, available and free of charge for all children without discrimination. This approach means that children should learn about their rights at school, and that this is reflected in the school's working methods. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has expanded on Article 29 in its General Comment No. 1, emphasising that school must be child-friendly, promote tolerance and take the participation of the child and the needs and development of the individual child into account. Education must also be relevant and safeguard the principles of the best interests, survival and development of the child. This means that education must consist of more than reading, writing and arithmetic. In an age of HIV/AIDS and other threats, this is an extremely important focus.

A study that was recently carried out in seven of Norway's main partner countries shows that children, young people and adults have little awareness of their rights. It is therefore also a priority task to help ensure that countries strengthen human rights education in schools and support local non-governmental organisations, the media, etc.

In addition to the two Millennium Development Goals that concern education, Norway has also adopted the six more comprehensive goals from the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. They include early childhood care and education and basic education outside the parameters of formal schooling, i.e. literacy programmes and informal education and training for people who are not covered by the formal education system.

In 2003, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched the document Education for All: A Strategy for Education in the South. The strategy provides the main principles and guidelines for Norway's activities in the education sector, which are based on a human rights approach. We do not intend to summarise the contents here, but merely note that we are concerned

about the vulnerability of children and young people, and the critically vulnerable groups among them. We will focus on how we can ensure that education becomes a strategic tool in efforts to meet their needs and realise their rights.

Early childhood and education for girls

Educating girls is regarded as being the most effective weapon in the fight against poverty. Education strengthens girls' skills and capacity, their dignity and their belief in their own abilities. It is an important means of reducing maternal and infant mortality and the number of births, improving the health of families and children, and increasing women's productivity and income. Education in early childhood has an especially strong impact. These are examples of the clear synergies that exist between health and education.

Why are girls held back? In general, girls' right to education is limited by poverty, gender differences in the family and in society, gender-based division of labour, and the need of families to put children to work. Sensitive issues, such as patriarchal authoritarian structures, the preference for a son, early marriage and pregnancy, transitional rituals and sexual taboos play an important role. Educational services are also important, in terms of cost, access, distance, hygiene and type of school. Girls also face greater problems in realising their rights within schools, facing intolerance, discrimination, violence, a lack of female teachers, unethical behaviour by teachers and sexual prejudice in teaching and curricula. In many countries pregnant girls are often expelled from school, and this is a serious problem. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women contains a clear demand for this type of discrimination to be eliminated.

As a result of these factors, girls have special difficulty in completing their education. However, in the period 1990-2000, the number of girls who completed primary education at the global level increased by 76 per cent. They are still lagging behind in comparison with boys (85 per cent). A total of 150 million children drop out of school before completing four years of education, and the majority of them are girls.

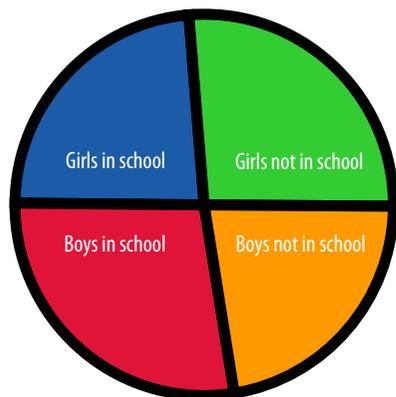
All children and young people have equal rights. However there may be different strategies for realising their rights. Boys and girls could not always be taught in the same way with exactly the same curriculum. All differential treatment is not necessarily negative. In certain situations, automatic

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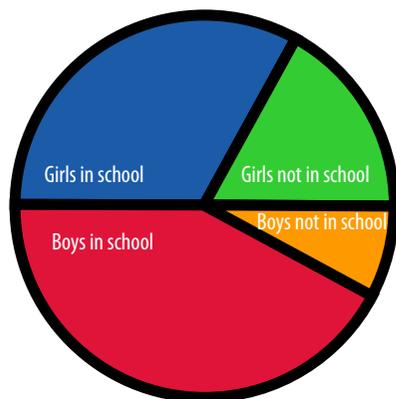
CHAPTER 3 THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO EDUCATION

Proportion in Primary School in 1995

Sub-Saharan Africa



Southern-Asia



Proportion in primary school is the number of enrolled pupils/students aged 6-11 as a proportion of the total population in that age group.

Source: World Education Report 1995 (UNESCO)

equality may be discriminatory. Education on female and male sexuality should be organised according to socio-cultural conditions. Special activities aimed at strengthening the position of girls should be introduced. Boys' violent behaviour towards girls should be prevented by education.

Young people and education

Education, especially primary education, is the most important factor in giving young people the necessary skills and opportunities to develop and prepare themselves for life. Without primary education, the danger of dependency, poverty and exploitation is far greater. The current situation is depressing. More than 153 million young people cannot read, and 63 per cent of them are young women. The literacy rate in developing countries is higher among young men (87 per cent) than among young women (77 per cent).

However, primary education is not enough to enable young people to qualify for a well-paid job. Vocational education and entrepreneurial training must be significantly improved for young people in developing countries. This type of education has had far too little priority in most countries. Priority must also be given to secondary and higher education.

Critically vulnerable groups and groups at risk

A large number of the 113 million children who do not start school or drop out of school belong in the critically vulnerable groups. A lack of education in itself makes children vulnerable, but in this case, as in so many other areas of human rights, it is the groups that are already marginalised that are the hardest hit. School and education have an important protective function for these groups, i.e. children from indigenous and ethnic minorities, refugees, orphans, children with HIV/AIDS, disabled children, street children, the children of drug and alcohol abusers and children in conflict situations. There are many different reasons why children and groups of children are marginalised or excluded from education. They may be social reasons, such as poverty, war or attitudes in society, or there may also be problems in the education system itself. The causes are often complex and rooted in the local culture.

Legislation is an obstacle in many countries because it excludes or limits the rights of certain groups to education. This often applies to refugees and disabled children. This factor may affect ethnic, religious or cultural

minorities, or children who do not have a birth certificate. Another common obstacle is that the Ministry of Education is not responsible for educating all children; the responsibility for refugees, HIV/AIDS patients or disabled persons is often allotted to other ministries. As a result of this, in many cases the Ministry of Education does not include the needs of such groups in its plans and budgets. However, this kind of fragmentation cannot absolve the authorities from their responsibility for all children.

Curricula may themselves be a barrier when they are irrelevant or not sufficiently flexible or demanding. The language in which children are taught also creates problems if it is not their mother tongue. Obstacles at school may include a lack of quality teaching, negative attitudes to certain groups of pupils, a lack of suitable infrastructure, and the cost of sending children to school.

The integration of critically vulnerable groups

Experience from different countries has shown that special projects or special schools that aim to reach vulnerable groups have enjoyed little success and have reached only a few children. The danger is that an educational system will be created parallel to the ordinary system and the pupils will not have official proof that they have completed their education. The authorities may also delegate responsibility for certain groups to non-governmental organisations or private schools, thereby absolving themselves of their own responsibility. It is therefore a challenge to persuade the authorities in various countries to give priority to including vulnerable groups in the ordinary education system. Ensuring that this consideration comes higher on the agenda is an important contribution to the process of realising the right of education for all.

The goal is to ensure that the needs of these groups are included in the central government's general plans for the education sector; thereby eliminating obstacles in the education system itself. In connection with these efforts, it is important to help ensure that the authorities have more capacity to test various methods of reaching vulnerable groups, preferably by building further on the experience gained by the non-governmental organisations. It is also important to build competence and invest in awareness-raising activities at both central and local levels. Until the educational system is capable of meeting the needs of vulnerable groups, efforts should be made to ensure that the authorities assure the quality of and recognise the informal system.

For children and young people in war zones or with other types of traumatic experiences, school is a fixed point in their existence. Life becomes more normal, and a process is set in motion that can help to heal their wounds. The psycho-social function of schools may prove to be just as important as their educational function.

Within the framework of increased assistance for education, young people in the 14-24 age group will be given higher priority in Norway's development co-operation. This can be done by facilitating a wider range of services in which vocational training is part of the education sector as a whole. Among other things, there is an almost insatiable need for people qualified in craft trades in Africa and Asia. The consequence must be drawn of the fact that very many young people in this age group are employed, not least in the informal sector. Provisions must be made for

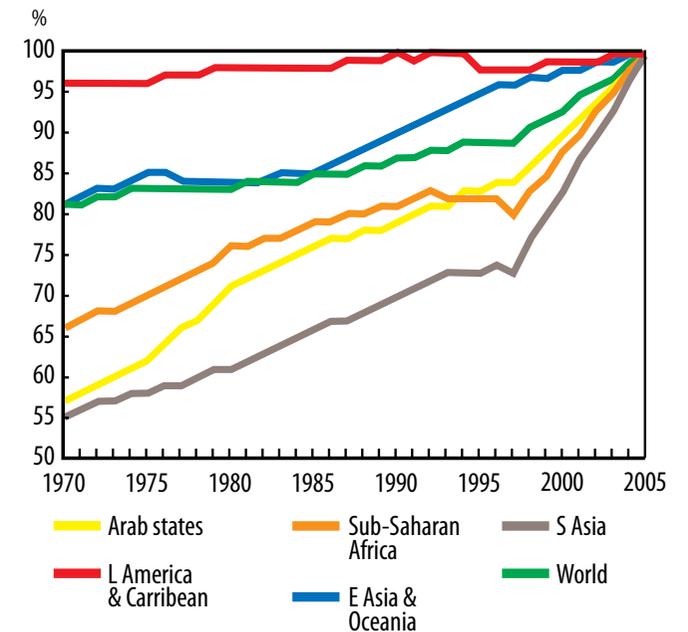
them to be able to qualify for paid work in the formal sector. Various types of counselling services must be linked to micro-credits and marketing training. Co-operation on training with the private sector must also be strengthened.

It is especially important to help ensure that girls have secondary education. Measures to strengthen pupil democracy must be reinforced and linked to general democracy and human rights education. The right of co-determination should be practised in schools, which are children's most important arena. Both parents and pupils have important roles to play in helping to develop a viable school. In this connection, there should be focus on developing pupils' and students' organisations.



Alefa Phiri

Girls as a percentage of boys in primary and secondary schools.



WHAT WILL NORWAY DO?

- Norway will continue its efforts to increase assistance for education to 15 per cent of the development assistance budget. Multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental channels will be used.
- Special priority will be given to primary education for girls and young women. UNICEF and the World Bank are important channels in this context.
- Vocational and entrepreneurial training for young people, including the critically vulnerable groups, will have priority in partner countries where this is appropriate. The ILO and UN-HABITAT will be important partners in this area.
- Norway will continue to support the work of non-governmental organisations for critically vulnerable groups. We will also support their efforts to ensure that various official bodies integrate their educational services for these groups, based on the experience gained by these organisations, and that ministries co-ordinate their activities.

- Together with other donor countries, Norway will make efforts to improve the quality, relevance and content of education. This has a strong influence on whether parents send their children to school. Educational research will be an important tool in this context.
- Norway will continue to stress the importance of reforms that entail decentralisation and giving local authorities greater influence. This is crucial with respect to issues such as the relevance of the educational system and the integration of critically vulnerable groups.
- Norway will seek to ensure that parents and pupils are actively involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of educational services in order to create a viable school that is adapted to people's needs. The development of pupils' and students' organisations is crucial in this context.
- Through the World Bank's Education for All – Fast Track Initiative, Norway will help to ensure that countries that have a plan for the education sector and a national poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) in place are guaranteed the necessary financing.
 - Norway will seek to promote vocational training and secondary and higher education in its partner countries.



Uriel Enrique Matamoros





The 1990s began in an atmosphere of genuine optimism for the world's children. With the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted in 1989, and the Children's Summit in 1990, it appeared that the right of the child to be respected and to have a decent childhood was taken seriously by the governments of the world and the international community. The fact that the Millennium Development Goals, adopted at the UN in 2000, also focus on the situation of children and young people shows that a new effort is necessary. The eight Millennium Development Goals represent just such an effort, even though they naturally do not replace the legal commitments that states parties have already made through the conventions. The Plan of Action from the UN Special Session on Children in 2002, *A World Fit for Children*, is also intended to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. However, they are not only good goals but also indicators of how the situation of children and young people develops. The following is a review of the situation of children and young people in relation to each of the Millennium Development Goals.

Goal No. 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target 1: Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than the equivalent of a dollar a day between 1990 and 2015.

Target 2: Reduce by half the proportion of people suffering from hunger between 1990 and 2015.

Calculations by the IMF show that between 1990 and the present day the number of people living in extreme poverty (i.e. on less than 1.08 1993-USD per day) has dropped from 1,292 billion to 1,169 billion, or from 29.2 per cent to 23 per cent. More than half of these people are children and adolescents below the age of 18, i.e. about 600 million. The same calculations indicate that by 2015 the proportion of people living in extreme poverty may have dropped to 13 per cent. The subsidiary goal will then have been achieved on a global basis, but 809 million people will still

be living on less than a dollar a day. More than half of them will be children and young people. The situation in sub-Saharan Africa is particularly difficult. Here, the forecasts indicate that only eight countries, equivalent to 15 per cent of the population, will achieve the goal.

The same applies to the "hunger goal". In sub-Saharan Africa one third of the population is suffering from malnutrition. This is equivalent to 24 per cent of all malnourished people in the world. The situation is even worse in South Asia, where 60 per cent of the world's malnourished people live. On a global basis, calculations show that 149 million children are malnourished and two thirds of them live in Asia. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of malnourished children has risen in the past decade. Here, every year, six million children die of malnutrition before they reach the age of five. The general trend is alarming; the number of malnourished people in the world increased by 18 million from 1995 to 2001.

Fighting poverty and hunger is the main objective of Norway's development co-operation.



MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

STATUS TOWARDS 2015

Article 2 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

Goal No. 2: Achieve universal primary education

Target 3: Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015.

There are approximately 113 million children of school age for whom the right to education has still not been realised. 150 million children drop out of school after less than four years. A recent study by the World Bank (2003) shows that only 37 of 155 developing countries manage to provide full primary education for all children. At the same time, education is one of the areas where great progress can be made in a short time, even if it will be difficult to achieve the goal in Africa, South Asia and the Middle East.

Norway has adopted the six more comprehensive goals from the Dakar conference on Education for All, arranged by UNESCO which, among other things, states that by 2015 primary education must be free, compulsory and of good quality. They also concern the care and education of small children and basic education in addition to formal schooling, literacy programmes and informal education and training for those who are not covered by the school system, such as boys and girls with disabilities. Norwegian surveys show that the effect of education is three times higher for disabled persons than for others in terms of their possibilities for an independent life and employment in adulthood.

According to Report No. 35 to the Storting (2003-2004): Fighting Poverty Together, education is "Job No. 1" for Norway. Norway's efforts in the field of education are based on the separate document Education for All: A Strategy for Education in the South (2002).

Article 28 (I) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

States Parties recognise the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

- (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;*
- (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures, such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;*
- (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;*
- (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;*
- (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.*

Goal No. 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.

Greater access to education, which is probably the most effective means of achieving gender equality and lifting girls out of social and economic repression, is far from being realised. In some parts of South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, the registration rate for girls in primary school has dropped in the past decade. As a result of a marked rise in assistance for education for girls in recent years, there is good reason to believe that this situation will improve significantly in future. The difference between boys' and girls' education is greatest in regions where the lowest percentage of children complete primary school and the average income is lowest. Of the 130 million children all over the world who have access to neither primary nor secondary education, two thirds are girls. Two thirds of illiterate people in the world are also women, and 94 per cent of them live in developing countries, mainly in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

584 million women in the world are illiterate. The equal right to education, irrespective of gender, is a high priority for Norway. Assistance for girls and education through UNICEF's multi-donor fund was almost doubled in both 2002 and 2003. In 2004 it was NOK 285 million.



Fernanda Castillo

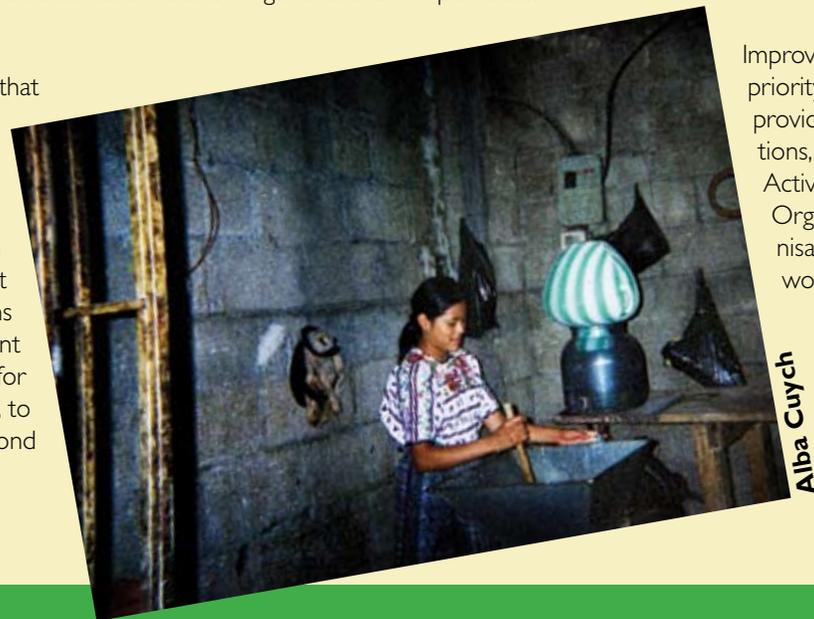
Goal No. 4: Reduce child mortality

Target 5: Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five by 2015.

In low-income countries, more than one in ten children dies before it reaches the age of 5. More than 10 million children die every year from conditions and diseases that they could have been protected from by improved maternity and infant care, good treatment, the right diet, clean drinking water and basic medical care. With the exception of sub-Saharan Africa, the infant mortality rate has dropped 19 per cent in the past 25 years. In Africa no significant progress has been made. In some countries the situation has become worse as a result of war and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It appears unlikely that any region in the world will achieve this goal by 2015.

More than 40 per cent of global child mortality is environmentally based. In the poor countries the percentage is even higher. The lack of safe drinking water, especially in Africa, and basic sanitation, especially in Asia, plays a decisive role, alongside indoor pollution and the effects of hazardous chemicals. Education for girls and young mothers also plays a role. The period during pregnancy and childbirth is the most vulnerable period of all. Investments in reproductive health not only reduce the short-term risks but also lay the foundations for a better later life and for generations to come.

This is the reason why programmes that focus on child health have high priority in Norway's development policy, both bilateral and multilateral. General access to primary health care is one of the main goals of Norway's development co-operation. Vaccination campaigns have had special priority in recent years through the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), to which Norway is currently the second largest contributor.



Alba Cuych

Goal No. 5: Improve maternal health

Target 6: Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio by 2015.

In large parts of the world there is a lack of reproductive health services, which results in unnecessary illness, injury and death. The WHO has estimated that approximately 530,000 women and girls die each year in connection with pregnancy, childbirth and abortion. Young girls account for a disproportionate percentage of them. Pregnancy among young girls, whether they are married or not, and whether pregnancy results in childbirth or abortion, is seriously neglected in many places, with extremely negative results for the girls' life and health. The highest number of maternal deaths is in Asia, where there is a large population combined with poverty and, in some places, a lack of access to necessary health services. However, the risk in connection with each pregnancy is generally highest in Africa. The life-cycle risk depends on both the risk of each pregnancy and the number of pregnancies. No other indicator in the health and social sector shows such great differences between rich and poor as maternal mortality. Moreover, there is little or no trace of any progress being made at the global level. If the world is to come even close to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, intense efforts must be made to reduce maternal mortality in general and among young girls in particular.

Improving maternal and child health is a high priority for Norway. Assistance is primarily provided through multilateral organisations, such as the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The former organisation has a special responsibility for working to reduce maternal mortality.

Goal No. 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

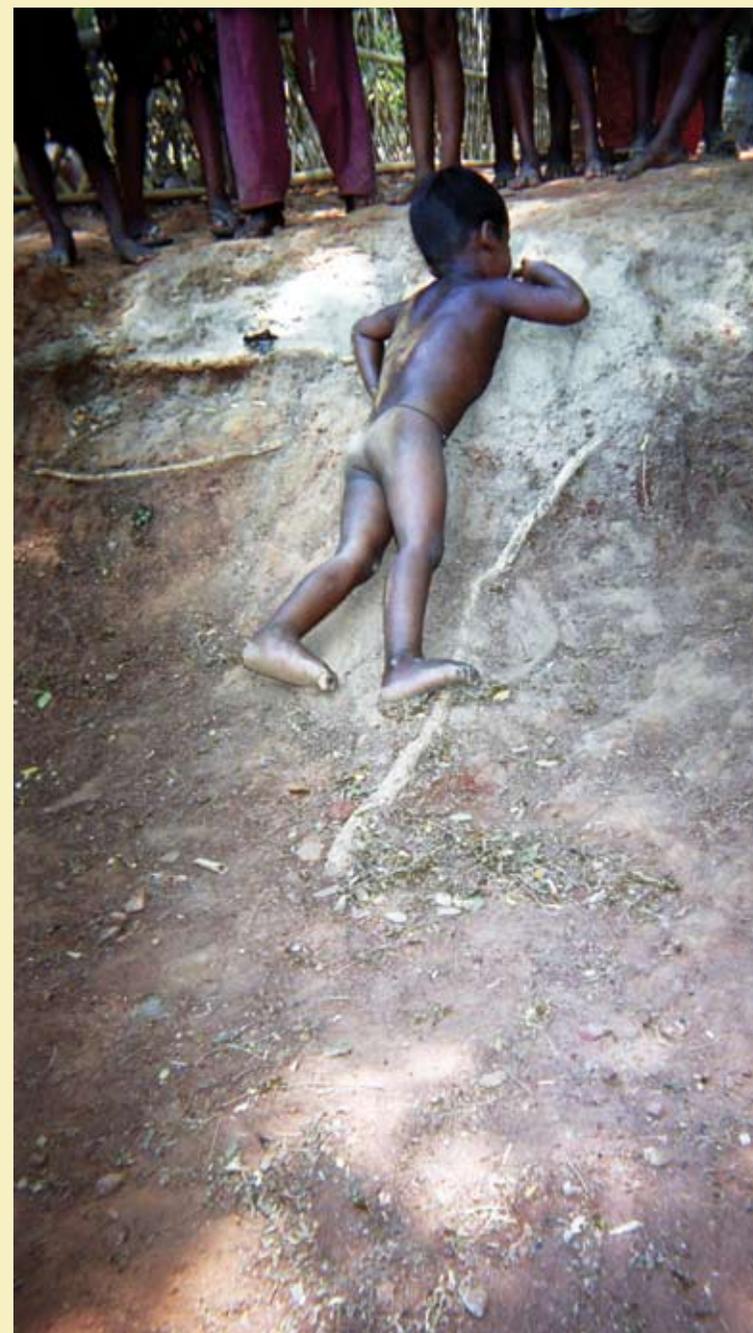
Target 7: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Target 8: Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases by 2015.

In the hardest hit countries in Africa, HIV/AIDS has set back many of the results that had been achieved in four decades of development. In 2001, 580,000 children under the age of 15 died of AIDS. 2.7 million children under 5 are living with the virus. 14 million have so far been orphaned, and this figure may grow to 25 million by 2010. Children are affected by HIV/AIDS in many ways. They may be directly infected in the mother's womb, at birth or through breastfeeding. They may also be infected as a result of unsafe and unwanted sexual relations with an infected partner or by sharing a syringe with a person who is infected with the virus. There is little doubt that effective prevention and treatment programmes save lives, reduce poverty and contribute to economic development.

Malaria costs 1.1 million lives a year. In sub-Saharan Africa, calculations indicate that one million children die each year from malaria. 100 million become ill. Tuberculosis kills about 2 million people in low-income countries each year. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria are the diseases that take the most lives. They all affect poor countries and poor people the hardest.

Norway is actively involved in efforts to prevent and stop the spread of HIV/AIDS through many channels, including both bilateral and multilateral development co-operation and support for civil society organisations. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) has gradually become an important actor. Norway also supports research in this area.



Munny Ali

Goal No. 7 Ensure environmental sustainability

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes: reverse loss of environmental resources.

Target 10: Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and satisfactory sanitary conditions by 2015.

Target 11: Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

Both the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg ten years later strongly emphasised the importance of increasing the awareness of children and young people of the factors that affect the environment and the management of natural resources, and of strengthening their opportunities to influence development. The recommendations from the two conferences to reverse environmental degradation at country level appear to have been followed up to only a limited extent. The same applies to facilitating the participation of children and young people. Development co-operation in this area has not accelerated either, even though Sweden, Switzerland and Norway are referred to as pioneering countries in international reports.

Children and young people are most affected by water-related health problems. Between 1.5 and 2 million children die each year from diseases related to water and sanitary conditions. At the global level, infants and children under the age of 5 account for 84 per cent of all deaths caused by diarrhoea. 74 per cent of all intestinal diseases affect children between the ages of 5 and 14. Diseases such as these lead to child malnutrition, which weakens their resistance and increases their vulnerability to disease. The long-term effects include stunted growth and weaker learning ability later on in life. The quality of water is especially important for the health of children under the age of three, while the quantity of water is decisive for children over the age of three. Diarrhoea is caused far more by "dirty hands" than poor quality drinking water. In addition to safe drinking water, it is therefore also essential to provide basic sanitation services. In this area,

the challenge is even greater, especially in Asia. Unfortunately the efforts that have been made so far do not indicate that we will achieve the water and sanitation goal.

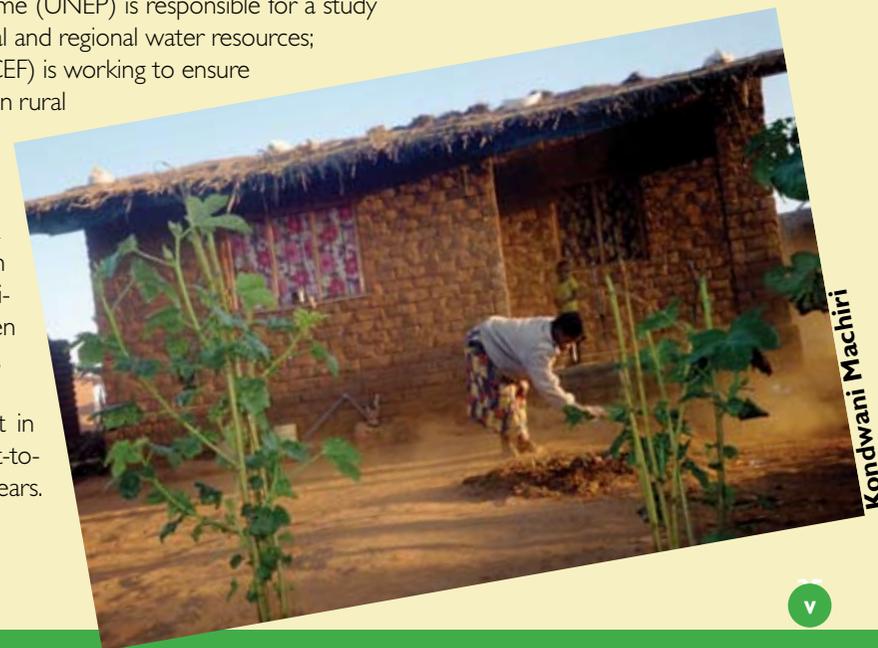
The number of slum dwellers is expected to increase to 1.5 billion by 2020. Four fifths of them will be living in developing countries, and the majority will be living below the poverty line. The conditions in which children grow up in the slums are far from child-friendly due to pollution of the air, water and soil, widespread substance abuse problems and violence. With a slum population that is already at one billion, the goal of improving the lives of 100 million is not proportionate to the size of the challenge. Efforts must be intensified because development in the slums of the world will determine the future of the majority of the world's children and young people.

WEHAB – a priority

Improved management of natural resources helps to safeguard the income and nutritional base of poor people. At the Johannesburg Summit, it was agreed that international co-operation in the so-called WEHAB areas (water, energy, health, agriculture and biological diversity) would be strengthened. "Water" can serve as an example of how the UN agencies play different roles according to their mandates:

- The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has been given the main responsibility for reporting and publishes a global water report;
- The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is responsible for a study of the status and trends in global and regional water resources;
- The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) is working to ensure access to clean water, especially in rural areas;
- The UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) has a special mandate to work on providing clean water in slum areas. This organisation has initiated special measures for children and young people in slum areas.

Norway has also increased its effort in the WEHAB areas in government-to-government co-operation for many years.



Kondwani Machiri

Goal No. 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Target 12: Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – nationally and internationally.

Target 13: Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports, enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC), cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance (ODA) for countries committed to poverty reduction.

Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States.

Target 15: Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term.

Target 16: In co-operation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth.

Target 17: In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

Target 18: In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies – especially information and communications technologies.

Several of these subsidiary goals are directly relevant to children and young people. However, Goal No. 8 is different from the other seven goals. It focuses on the importance of co-operation between rich and poor countries. Both

the developing countries themselves and the industrialised countries are responsible for providing good framework conditions for poverty reduction. It is in this Millennium Development Goal that the clear obligations of the industrialised countries are most visible. In return, the developing countries must improve their governance.

The Government white paper *Fighting Poverty Together* presents a coherent approach to the framework conditions that are necessary in developing countries in order to achieve poverty reduction, including fairer trade and a solution to their debt problems. It also means that we must analyse all relevant areas of policy, both individually and in conjunction with each other (coherence). Norway has for many years based its development co-operation on a partnership approach. As an extension of this approach, it will be important to build partnerships between children and young people in the North and the South, in the form of both formal and informal co-operation. More detailed comments on this may be found in the next chapter.



Mummy Ali

WHAT WILL NORWAY DO?

One of the main priorities of Norway's development co-operation is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The eight goals are closely linked to each other and are mutually dependent and reinforcing. A broad, integrated and multi-sectoral approach is required to achieve them. The goals are strongly linked to the rights and living conditions of children and young people. The situation as regards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, which have been re-stated above, shows that the main focus should be on:

- the especially vulnerable phases in the lives of children and young people, at birth and in infancy and during the transition from childhood to adulthood, (e.g. early pregnancy, unemployment, social and environmental problems, relevant education).
- primary education for girls and young women and equal access to further education.
- young girls who become pregnant are at special risk. Maternity care for these girls must be radically improved, and young people need suitably adapted reproductive health services, including contraceptives, to enable them to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- orphans and other critically vulnerable groups of young people, who often congregate in city slums.
- risk-related physical and social environments, e.g. without satisfactory water and sanitary conditions or with widespread substance abuse problems.

The above review shows that development co-operation must be intensified on a broad front, especially with respect to children and young people. This is one of the reasons why the Government is working to increase Norway's development assistance to 1 per cent of GNI and keep it at least at this level. The Government also intends to concentrate more on the countries that are lagging behind in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and will not be able to achieve them without a substantial amount of support. The Government therefore proposes that Norwegian government-to-government assistance be concentrated on two or three sectors in each country. (More information about this may be found in Report No. 35 to the Storting (2003-2004)).



Haqiqat



Children suffer more than adults from the consequences of health needs not being met and bear almost 40 per cent of the global burden of illness. Every day, more than 30,000 boys and girls die of causes that are largely preventable. The probability of children in poor families dying in the first week of life, the first month, the first year, or before they reach the age of five is far greater than for wealthier families. Children in poor families are ill more often and more seriously. Poor children are malnourished and lag behind in terms of growth and psycho-social development. The effects of these inequalities are not only immediate; later on they also lead to poorer achievement at school and in working life. A girl who is living in poverty today is more likely to die in childbirth fifteen or twenty years from now. It is highly probable that she will give birth to a child that is premature, malnourished, or falls ill and dies in infancy. The effects of poverty begin even before birth. Negative influences at the embryo stage increase the risk of disease, both in childhood and in adulthood. Far too many unborn babies and their mothers die or are seriously injured due to extremely deficient reproductive health services. Despite the fact that States have undertaken to safeguard rights that pertain to sexuality and reproductive health, these rights are often overlooked. Since girls and women are especially seriously affected,

The scope of the problem

- Nearly 11 million children under five years of age die each year. Almost 98 per cent of these deaths are in developing countries;
- 8 million of them are infants. Almost half of them die in the first week of life;
- The most important causes of death are pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, measles and HIV/AIDS. Malnutrition is linked to more than half of these deaths and most of them are poverty-related;
- An African child dies of malaria every 30 seconds, which is equivalent to more than one million deaths per year.
- Approximately 1.5 million young people die each year from drug abuse, suicide, injury, violence, disease or similar causes;
- In one out of every six births in developing countries, the mother is between 15 and 19 years of age;
- 50 per cent of all new HIV cases are young people.

Source: WHO 2003

failure to give priority to such rights is a breach of the principle of non-discrimination in all the universal human rights conventions.

In 2002 the World Health Organisation (WHO) completed a strategic document on child and adolescent health and development entitled Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI). It is based on three principles:

- Social disparities must be reduced and human rights must be respected, protected and realised, as set out inter alia in the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Measures must be based on a life-cycle approach that recognises the causal connections from birth through childhood, adolescence and adulthood;
- A public health service must be developed that focuses on the problems of the entire population and ensures access to effective health services that are relevant to these problems.

These principles will also provide the basis for Norway's development co-operation for children and young people in the health sector.

Infant and child mortality

Measures to reduce mortality among newborn babies must have higher priority if Millennium Development Goal No. 4 is to be achieved. A large proportion of infant mortality is related to complications in connection with pregnancy and childbirth. These complications can be avoided by improving the health and nutritional status of mother and baby, and by ensuring that efficient health services are provided quickly and are widely available. It is especially necessary to provide better care immediately after childbirth, which in many places means that the focus of maternity care should be changed. Girls must also be protected from early marriage and from bearing children at too early an age.

Unhygienic and unsafe environments are a risk to children's survival. Approximately 1.5 million children die each year from drinking dirty water, insufficient access to water for hygienic purposes or a lack of access to sanitary facilities. About 88 per cent of them die of diarrhoea. Babies in such environments that are not exclusively breastfed are seven times more likely to die of diarrhoea and five times more likely to die of pneumonia than breastfed babies.



CHAPTER 4 THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO HEALTH

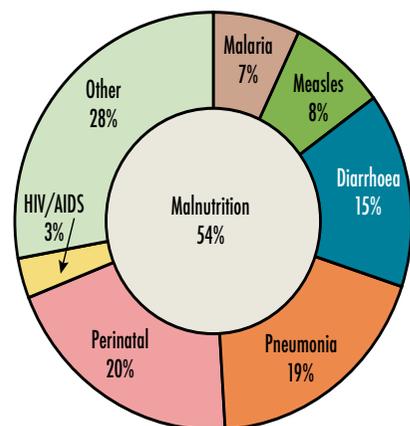
Article 6 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

- (1) States Parties recognise that every child has the inherent right to life.
- (2) States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Article 24 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

States parties recognise the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

Distribution of 10.5 million deaths among children less than 5 years old in all developing countries, 1999



Source: WHO 2003

Almost half of all child mortality is caused by four diseases; acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malaria and measles. All these diseases could have been prevented or cured at little cost. Millions of children who die of diarrhoea could, in most cases, have been saved by extremely cheap sugar and salt mixtures. Although malnutrition alone is seldom a direct cause of death, it is estimated to be a contributory factor in 50 per cent of all child deaths.

Effective preventive measures for children

Access to preventive services is the key to reducing childhood diseases and child mortality. Everyday habits in the family and the local community, such as breastfeeding and hand-washing, are important for children's health. It is therefore extremely important to give families the information and the resources they need to live in a way that promotes their health. Other preventive approaches that have a strong impact on mortality include the use of bed nets impregnated with mosquito repellent to prevent malaria, and the distribution of vitamin A supplements. The knowledge of health personnel and parents about the causes and consequences of disfunctions is vitally important for prevention and for children's growth and development. Such knowledge should be an integral part of efforts to improve child health and develop good health systems.

It is estimated that vaccination alone saves the lives of three million children each year. By improving and expanding these services, it is estimated that it would be possible to save a further two million lives a year. Norway has given high priority to vaccination programmes. In 2002 Norway was already the second largest bilateral contributor to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI). Since then our contributions have increased significantly. GAVI is now working with the WHO and UNICEF on a global vaccination strategy. There is also reason to expect progress from new international initiatives, such as Roll Back Malaria, Stop TB, the Partnership for Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM). Vaccination is one of the most cost-effective measures we know of for preventing diseases for which a vaccine exists. But it can only have a lasting long-term effect in conjunction with more equitable distribution of social goods, improved health systems and general efforts to promote public health.

Basic health services and health education a prerequisite?

Improving the health of children will require effective, accessible health services in order to improve the diagnosis and treatment of ordinary diseases. However, many children die without having had any contact with the health service. Strategies must therefore be developed to increase the availability of good quality health services that promote better health behaviour. Providing community-based health services that are available to all is a fundamental prerequisite for success.

Children's health is critically vulnerable to environmental factors, such as a lack of clean water and poor sanitary conditions. Well-planned and well-managed programmes to improve water quality and sanitation, along with programmes to promote better hygiene will therefore have a positive impact on child health. In this connection, Norway will give special priority to improving water and sanitation in urban slum areas in future, in co-operation with UN-HABITAT and others.

Furthermore, educating mothers, and especially health education, will be an especially important prerequisite for children's survival. Development policy and programmes that promote education for girls will have an effect on child mortality rates. Access to nutritious food is an important factor in children's development, their achievements at school and their ability to withstand and recover from infections. Government policies that promote physical and social security also play an important role. Overpopulated, poorly ventilated houses also lead to respiratory diseases and death. This underlines the importance of a relevant and appropriate housing policy in the fight against poverty. According to the WHO, secure relationships with the family, adults and teachers and an established philosophy of life also play an important role in delaying children's sexual debut and their use of drugs and alcohol, and in preventing depression.

Organisations for children and young people play an important role in promoting their participation in and influence on local and national decision-making processes related to health. In connection with sensitive issues, such as sexuality, HIV/AIDS, etc., such organisations have proved to be particularly effective because they "speak the same language" as the target groups.

Sexual and reproductive health

The goal of achieving “reproductive health and rights for all” by 2015 was adopted by the world’s leaders at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994. The Programme of Action from the conference covers a broad spectrum: from focusing on more prevention and less maternal mortality to better education and focus on the gender perspective and gender equality. At the ICPD, global political agreement was reached for the first time on promoting sexual and reproductive health, with focus on individual rights. Good sexuality must be promoted, sexual violence prevented and good sexual relations emphasised, including men’s responsibility for their own and women’s reproductive health. Sexual education and relevant health services must be available.

The core of the ICPD and Norwegian policy in the field of sexual and reproductive health is to make sexual life and pregnancy safer. The first condition for achieving this is to gain respect for the fact that all sexual activity must be voluntary. This strategy addresses this area of health care because it is especially important for the survival and protection of children and young people. It is also a field that is relevant to many of the Millennium Development Goals. The link between reproductive health and the following Millennium Development Goals is especially clear: Promote gender equality and empower women (Goal No. 3), Reduce child and maternal mortality (Goals No. 4 and 5), Halt and reverse

Sexual and reproductive health and rights are linked to many important issues, such as:

- Invoking human rights to promote sexual and reproductive health;
- The right to decide whether and when to have sexual relations;
- The right to decide whether and when to have children, and how many children to have;
- The right to sexual education, information and access to safe, effective, acceptable and reasonably-priced contraceptives, as well as other methods of choice for the regulation of fertility which are not against the law;
- The right to health services, including reproductive health services.

the spread of HIV/AIDS (Goal No. 6). There is also broad agreement about the strong connection between results in the field of reproductive health and the overarching Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty (Goal No. 1).

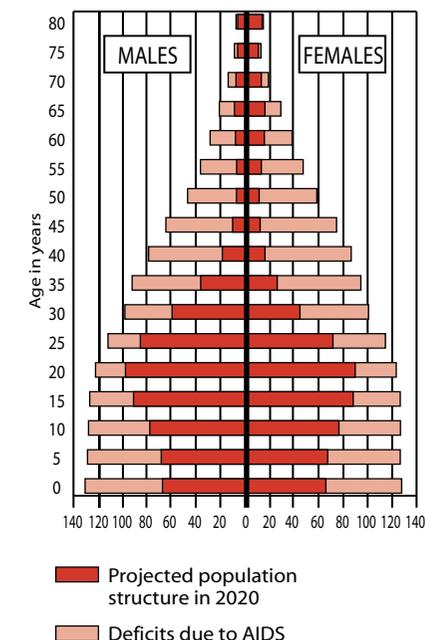
The Programme of Action from the Cairo conference has always been controversial due to sensitivities relating to sexuality in general and young people’s sexuality and abortion in particular. Nevertheless, agreement was reached on both these most controversial issues, young people’s right to confidential services, and the abortion issue.

The abortion issue in an international context

The Programme of Action from the Cairo conference points out that national authorities determine access to abortion procedures. It also states that abortion should never be promoted as a form of family planning. Nevertheless, it was also stated that unsafe abortions are a social health problem. This means abortions that are carried out without proper medical expertise and equipment. Unsafe abortions, which are often carried out illegally, cause an estimated 70,000 deaths a year, and ten to twenty times as many women suffer lasting injuries, including infertility and chronic pain. A large proportion of the women who have unsafe abortions are young. This has implications for young girls. Rapid, careful treatment of women with complications can save many lives. It was also agreed that abortion complications must always be treated, regardless of the legality of the abortion itself. It was also agreed that abortions that are not in contravention of the law must be carried out in a medically responsible manner. By coming into contact with the health service, women may also be provided with means of contraception so that they can avoid new undesired pregnancy.

Abortion legislation is generally far more restrictive in developing countries than in Norway. Despite this, a significant number of illegal abortions are carried out. Such practices often entail a serious risk to the health of the pregnant woman. It is therefore clear that the abortion problem will not be solved by legislation alone. We know that the best way of avoiding undesired pregnancy, and thereby also abortion, is to have good access to and knowledge of proper methods of contraception. This is also the most effective way to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmissible diseases. Openness, thorough knowledge and the promotion of good attitudes, plus access to effective means of contraception (especially condoms) is therefore crucial. The many very

Projected population structure with or without the AIDS epidemic, Botswana, 2020



early pregnancies in poor countries also increases the need for relevant health services that are capable of dealing with the complications that more frequently occur among young and often very poor mothers. It will be crucial for successful efforts to improve sexual and reproductive health that the donor community acts in accordance with national legislation and respects the sensitivities associated with sexuality.

HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmissible diseases

The spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmissible diseases among young people and the high mortality rate due to pregnancy and abortion show that adolescence, like the first years of childhood, is a period when the risks to health are high. For example, half of the 14,000 HIV infections that occur each day affect young people in the 15-24 age group. Girls are far more vulnerable than boys (see *also pages 20/21*). Access to relevant sexual education, information and knowledge about the correct use of contraceptives, the promotion of good attitudes to sexuality, and especially the rights of girls, are therefore crucial. The same applies to access to good treatment in connection with sexually transmissible diseases and pregnancy.

The following figures (estimates) illustrate the seriousness of the situation:

- 250,000 children are infected with HIV each month
- 530,000 women and girls die each year from complications that could largely have been avoided with good maternal care. Young girls are especially vulnerable: approximately 500,000 girls die each year from complications in connection with pregnancy.
- 350 million couples do not have access to contraceptives that could increase their control of their own fertility.
- 78,000 women die each year as the result of unsafe abortions.
- Girls in the 15-19 age group account for at least 5 million of the 20 million unsafe abortions carried out without adequately qualified medical personnel.
- 2 million girls are the victims of genital mutilation each year.
- 1.2 million children around the world between the ages of 13 and 18 are the victims of sexual exploitation.
- Young homosexuals and lesbians are persecuted and punished in many countries.

Source: UNFPA, RFSU

It is important to have a holistic approach to the prevention of sexually transmissible diseases in general and HIV/AIDS in particular. The so-called ABC Method, which focuses on A (abstinence), B (be faithful) and C (condoms) has produced good results in several countries, but there has also proved to be a need for more methods. Furthermore, this method depends on being able to promote all three dimensions at the same time and on a broad basis. There may be problems in connection with the C component for several target groups. For example, women in permanent relationships and especially vulnerable groups (e.g. prostitutes) will have difficulty in protecting themselves effectively using only the A and B methods. Recent surveys, which show that young, married African women are more exposed to HIV infection than unmarried women underlines the seriousness of this situation. It is therefore necessary to supplement the ABC strategy with new, innovative methods. For example, the development of protective methods that women can control themselves and that do not prevent pregnancy is important. Microbicides are an example of this.

It is not necessarily a woman's own behaviour that makes her the victim of involuntary pregnancy, HIV infection and infection from other sexually transmissible diseases. The marked difference in the risk of HIV infection for young girls compared with young boys in Africa is also evidence of a widespread use of force and abuse that is not the result of voluntary sex or promiscuous behaviour among young African women. Sexual abstinence as a method nevertheless has a special value that must be recognised, since it can help to legitimise and confirm young people's right to resist involuntary sexual activity. Regardless of method, we are totally dependent on increased tolerance and respect for the different needs of young people for proper, easily available information about sexuality and relevant reproductive health services.

The transfer of HIV from mother to child is the most common means of infecting babies and infants. In 2003, it is estimated that 700,000 children were infected with HIV, according to WHO figures. Most children are infected during pregnancy, at birth or through breastfeeding. The WHO and UNICEF are working hard to acquire knowledge about how mothers should be treated during childbirth to prevent the child from HIV infection. Experience from the West shows that preventive measures can significantly reduce the transfer of infection from mother to child. In our part of the world, the risk of infection has been reduced to less than 2 per cent. In poor areas where such preventive measures are not avail-

lable, the risk of transfer is approximately 30 per cent. Norway supports programmes to prevent the transfer of HIV infection from mother to child, among other things through its contributions to the GFATM, UNICEF and WHO "3 by 5" initiative to ensure that three million people infected with HIV/AIDS are treated before the end of 2005.

Family, school and community-based programmes are important in helping young people to obtain the information, services and skills they need to protect their sexual and reproductive health and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. More work is required to develop and ensure access to more effective, cheaper contraception methods that can be controlled by girls and young women themselves. It will be an important task to influence boys' attitudes to girls in general and to improve boys' and girls' knowledge of sexuality and reproductive health. Relationships and power structures between the sexes must be taken into account, not least relationships between girls and older men (often called "sugar daddies").

Female genital mutilation

It is estimated that between 100 and 130 million girls and women in the world have been exposed to genital mutilation. This custom is practised in 28 African countries, among some ethnic minorities in Asia and among immigrant groups in Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA. There are major variations between individual countries, from 5 per cent of all women in Uganda and Congo to 98 per cent in Somalia and Djibouti. Every day, more than 5000 girls are exposed to genital mutilation. In the course of a year, this means that about two million girls are the victims of this brutal abuse and the pain, trauma and physical and psycho-sexual injury it entails. The physical and psychological consequences of this practice range from problems with movement, weaker sexual functions and infertility due to infection, and a greater risk of HIV infection.

In 2003 the Government presented a plan for its international efforts to prevent female genital mutilation, based on the Plan of Action presented by the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs in 2000. The Government wishes to increase efforts in this field through a number of measures to:

- prevent and contribute to social mobilisation against female genital mutilation;
- treat and rehabilitate girls and women who have been genitally mutilated;
- strengthen expertise at all levels in efforts to combat female genital mutilation.

Female genital mutilation must be understood in a broad socio-economic, religious and cultural context. It is essential that measures to stop this practice are based on countries' own priorities and based in local communities. Political dialogue and influence will be of crucial importance, especially in countries where the leaders do not recognise the extent and consequences of this custom. Improved co-operation with local and national non-governmental organisations and with UN agencies, such as UNICEF, the WHO and UNFPA will also be important.

Living conditions for young homosexuals and lesbians

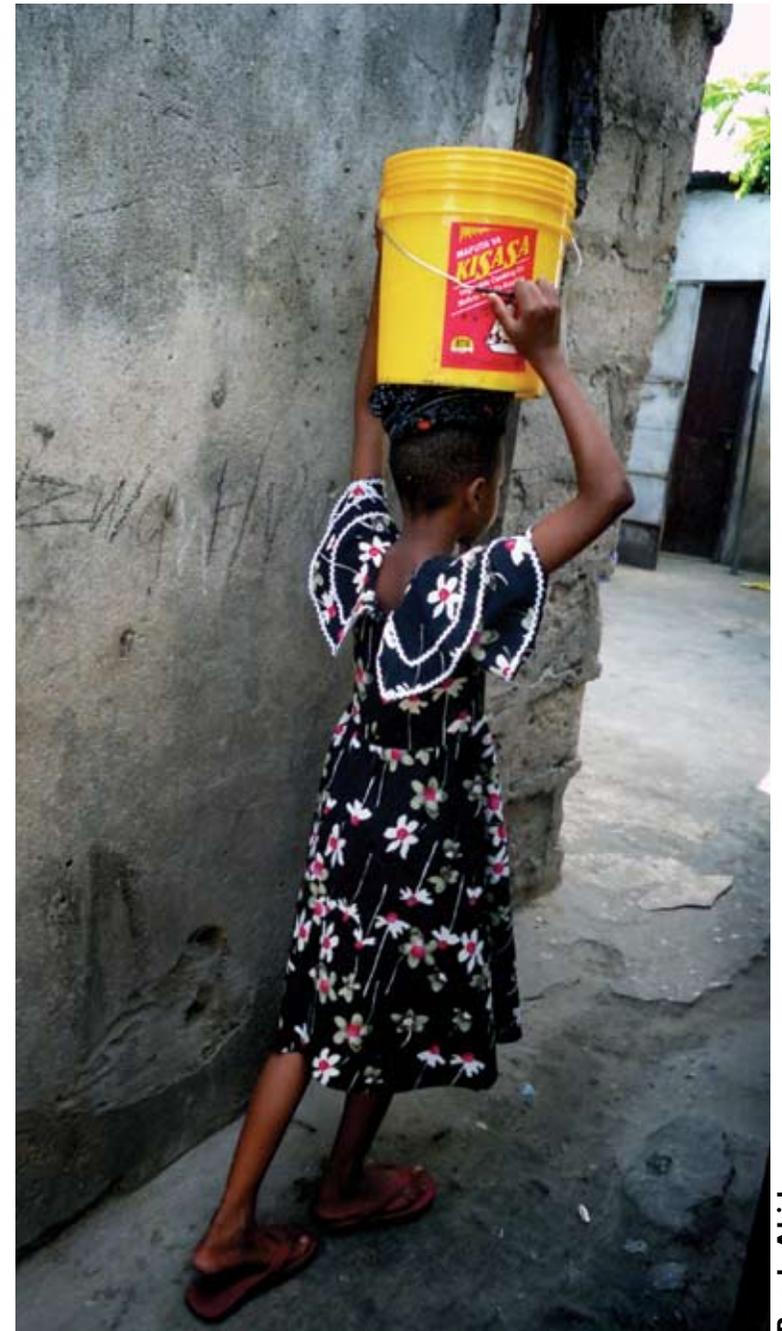
Most young people are often uncertain and vulnerable in connection with their own and other people's sexuality. Young homosexuals and lesbians are often particularly vulnerable because many of them are living under strong pressure, which results in psycho-social problems and high suicide rates. More than 90 countries in the world have legislation that prohibits sexual relations between persons of the same sex. Homosexuals and lesbians are persecuted, exposed to violence and stigmatised in very many countries.

Norway condemns the discrimination and persecution of homosexuals and lesbians in several international contexts. This is an extremely controversial topic, both at country level and in global contexts. In many societies, homosexuality is officially a "non-topic", in the sense that it is not on the official agenda and is hardly mentioned in everyday conversation. However, this does not mean that the topic is irrelevant. In several of our partner countries, Norway has therefore supported non-governmental organisations working to improve living conditions for homosexuals and lesbians. Norway will continue these efforts with the sensitivity that is required when dealing with matters relating to sexuality.

International co-operation to combat alcohol and drug abuse

Alcohol and drugs are serious obstacles to development and represent a poverty problem that affects children and young people in particular. While the rich countries of the world are increasingly limiting the sale and use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs in order to protect children and young people, the use of these substances is increasing sharply in many developing countries. Due to the lack of regulation and control of the sale and marketing of these substances, many developing countries are vulnerable to strongly growing commercial pressures. Substance abuse often has the strongest impact on the most disadvantaged groups, including children and young people.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child obliges states parties to take the necessary steps to protect children from illegal use of narcotic substances and prevent the use of children in the production and sale of such substances. The use of hard drugs is increasing particularly strongly among street children and child prostitutes. In many cases, children are also involved in trafficking such substances. An increasing number of countries are adopting the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco. There is no such convention on alcohol. Broader, more committed international co-operation is essential in order to protect children and young people from both legal and illegal substances. In co-operation with developing countries, Norway will help to counteract the enormous negative marketing and advertising pressure that is exacerbating the situation.



Ramla Akida

WHAT WILL NORWAY DO?

- Norway will continue to give priority to child health and nutrition. We will work to ensure that children and young people have access to health services free of charge up to the age of 18.
- One of the main tasks will be supporting the development of health care systems at country level that provide good primary health care services in general and reproductive health services designed for young people in particular. The lack of health personnel in a number of poor countries is a major challenge. Norway will participate actively in multilateral co-operation, for example through WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNAIDS, and in bilateral co-operation, particularly in the main partner countries Malawi and Mozambique.
- We will continue to strongly support international vaccination efforts and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation, GAVI, and will work to ensure that immunisation becomes an integrated part of holistic national health care systems.
- We will, in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, help to mobilise resources to combat poverty-related diseases, for example through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, GFATM.
- Norway will increase its support to the water and sanitation sector through both multilateral and bilateral co-operation. The geographical focus will be particularly on sub-Saharan Africa.
- Through active efforts in the educational sector and in alliances with NGOs, particularly children's and young people's organisations, we will seek to improve boy's and girl's knowledge of their own and each other's sexuality.

- We will continue to give top priority to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, including among children and young people. In the light of the increasing feminisation of the AIDS epidemic, Norway will seek actively to highlight the vulnerable position of girls and women. Special measures will be implemented to prevent girls from being excluded from the school system because of HIV/AIDS or pregnancy.
- We will seek to intensify international efforts to combat the illicit use of narcotic drugs and ensure that WHO is given a leading role in the fight against alcohol-related injuries.





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Millions of children and young people all over the world are exploited and abused every day. Children are used as labour, as participants in war and violent conflicts, and in prostitution or the pornography industry. They are conscripted into armed forces, abducted and sold. Some kind of international crime is often involved in this exploitation. However, most of the exploitation of children takes place in their local community, and is perpetrated by family members or others they trust.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is more detailed and comprehensive than other conventions as regards the right to protection against abuse and exploitation. The States Parties have wide-ranging obligations in this regard. Articles 19, and 33-37, use the wording "States Parties shall" and "States Parties undertake to", rather than the more frequently used wording "recognise the child's right to", which does not specify where the responsibility lies. Articles 33-37 concern protection against the illicit use of narcotic drugs, sexual exploitation and abuse, abduction, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment and "all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare".

Many organisations and countries, including Norway, have chosen a children's rights-based approach to ensure that all children are protected against abuse, neglect, violence, exploitative labour and armed conflict. Children also have the right to survival and development, i.e. the right to the highest standard of health, education, food, shelter and welfare. Children need secure relationships. This also means that children have a right to participate in decisions that affect them. Children are often regarded as helpless victims. Adults risk making them victims unless they listen to children's views before action is taken. There are a number of examples of cases where children and young people have organised to fight for their interests, and in a number of cases they have been successful, even at the international level. In addition to effective legislation, carefully targeted programmes that recognise children's rights and help to extricate children from dangerous situations are needed.

All children and young people have the right to protection. Therefore, protection is particularly important in a strategy focused on their general vulnerability, vulnerable periods and critically vulnerable groups and groups at risk. Girls and young women have the right to special protection because of discriminative gender roles. This is a reflection of the distribution of power between men and women in societies all over the world. Thus, it is important to focus on boys and young men in our efforts to achieve

genuine gender equality and to combat violence against girls and women. Efforts to change attitudes in families, at school, at the work place and in organisations are crucial here.

Article 32 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: *States Parties recognise the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. (2) States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular: a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment, b) provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment, and c) provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.*

What does child labour entail?

International legislation on child labour is relatively comprehensive and goes back to the beginning of the 1990s. The most important conventions in this area today are the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ILO Convention No. 138 Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1973, ratified by approximately 50 states, including Norway) and ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child does not prohibit children from working, but instructs the parties to protect children through legislative, administrative, social and educational measures from work that may be hazardous or constitute a risk to the child's health and education, or interfere with the child's education. The extent to which work is harmful or not depends on the child's age and life situation.

Consequently, work must not prevent the child from obtaining an education. All children are entitled to primary education in order to ensure that they learn basic skills. In certain cases, it is necessary to organise education for children who have to work in order to survive. In addition to the hours spent in school, they also need time to do their homework.

ILO Convention No. 38 specifies 13 (12) as the age-limit for light work over a limited period of time. Otherwise the age-limit is 15 (14) except

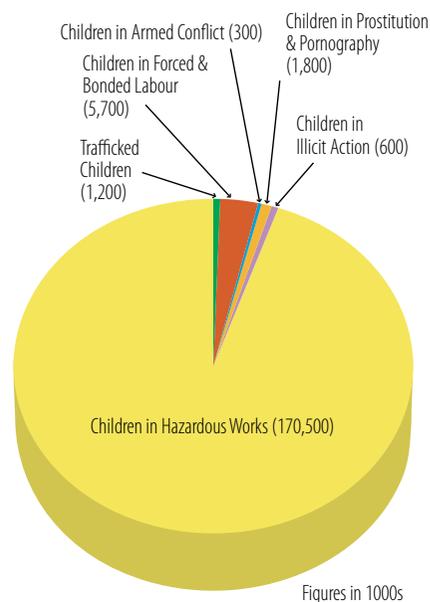
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CHAPTER 5 THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROTECTION

Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

(1) States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Estimated number of children in the worst forms of child labour



Article 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, first sentence, states that:

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Article 35 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

States Parties shall 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.

for work where other conventions stipulate an age-limit of 18. Norway's position is that children under the age of 13 must go to school and not work. Since it is and will continue to be necessary for children to work, the regulation of the minimum age, working conditions, working hours and pay is extremely important in order to prevent exploitation of children. It is necessary to ensure that the provisions are conformed to and that educational possibilities are provided for working children. Protection of this type is often far behind protection of adult employees because labour legislation usually only applies to people aged over 18, or in some cases 16.

Where do children work and what do they do?

Asia has the highest number of child labourers, equivalent to approximately 61 per cent of the total number in the world, compared with 32 per cent in Africa and 7 per cent in Latin America. In all regions, the statistics indicate that more boys than girls participate in economic activity. However, the figures conceal the number of girls who work as house servants, etc. Most children work in the agricultural sector, small industries and service industries. Only 5 per cent work in export industries. It is therefore a priority to help children in the informal

Scope

In its report "A Future Without Child Labour", the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that 246 million children – one out of every six children aged 5-17 – is working. The report also states that:

- One child out of every eight in the world – approximately 179 million children aged 5-17 – is still engaged in the worst forms of child labour, which is hazardous to the child's physical, mental and moral well-being;
- Approximately 111 million children involved in hazardous labour are under 15 years of age and should immediately be withdrawn from this type of work;
- A further 59 million adolescents aged 15-17 should receive essential and immediate protection from hazardous labour or be withdrawn from such work;
- Approximately 8.4 million children are trapped in the unconditional worst forms of child labour, including slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labour, forced recruitment for use in armed conflict, prostitution, pornography and illicit activities.

sector. It is here that the most hazardous and intolerable forms of child labour are found.

The worst forms of child labour

There was an important breakthrough in 1999. Employers, governments and trade unions signed a global agreement, ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. This convention defines the worst forms of child labour, including: a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

The important role of parents

It is important to remember that most children live in families that care for them. We can often improve children's lives by improving working conditions for adults and securing decent remuneration. If adults earn a decent wage, they can care for a family. It should, therefore, not be necessary for children to work. In many of the poorest countries, there is a close connection between poverty and child labour and between the situation of women, women's access to productive work and the situation of children doing hazardous work. In these countries, however, women have limited access to education, few skills that they can use in paid employment, and limited legal protection. They therefore work in poorly paid, insecure jobs and have a large number of children to care for, and are more dependent on their children's incomes. When a national economy slumps it is often the women who lose their jobs. Social measures, to the extent they exist, seldom support women. Children's pay is even lower, and in such situations they may function as a labour reserve.

The role of authorities, the trade union movement and the media

One of the main tasks of governments is to create conditions for growth that benefits the poorest people. This means that the conditions must be such that adults receive adequate remuneration for their work and that

also new, meaningful jobs are created. In this respect, democratic and representative trade unions in individual countries have a major responsibility. Access to free, relevant, good quality education is also an important strategic element in the fight against child labour. In many countries, education entails expenses, such as school uniforms and books, which are a major obstacle for many families. In many places children leave primary school at the age of ten. Very many leave before that. It will be a challenge to develop opportunities for continued education after this age. In general, education must be made more relevant to the labour market, with greater emphasis in the highest classes on practical and vocational training.

Long-term, preventive solutions are best achieved through co-operation with relevant non-governmental organisations and authorities. Authorities, international agencies, the private sector, civil society and consumer groups have different advantages and roles to play. UN agencies, such as the ILO and UNICEF, have the opportunity to help governments promote the rights of the child. On the other hand, non-governmental organisations are often better at working with and in local communities. Trade unions can use their possibilities for organising workers to introduce measures to prevent child labour. Teachers and their organisations have an especially important function. The media also have an important role to play in shedding light on events in this field. Dialogue between the social partners reinforces efforts to combat child labour, and the fight against child labour reinforces social dialogue.

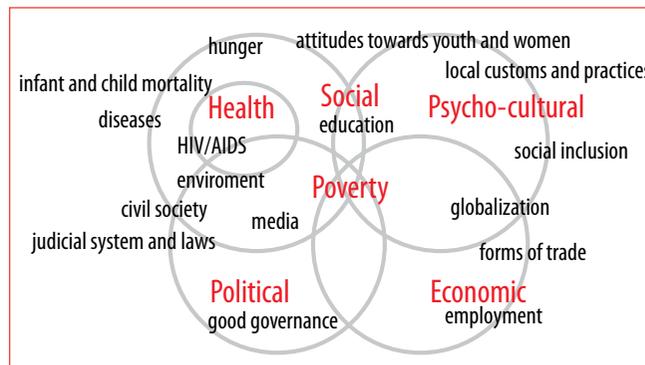
Trafficking in children

One of the most disgusting abuse that has been uncovered in recent years is trafficking in children for directly exploitative work. This type of trafficking entails the sale of human beings to earn money, or in other words, slave trade. Many of these children end up in the sex industry. They are sold with promises of a good education and a good life. UNICEF estimates that 200,000 children are trafficked each year in Western and Central Africa. South Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and India) is another key area. The Mekong region in South-East Asia is a third. Here, child trafficking is closely linked to the drug trade and sexual exploitation.

The authorities of individual countries must take the lead in combating this problem; efforts in the local community are not enough. Some governments must focus on children who leave their home country. Others must

look more closely at children who arrive. Trafficking in children is a complex regional and international problem. At the international level, we therefore need stronger, better co-ordinated institutions to deal with this problem. Many governments are currently formulating national plans of action to prioritise measures in the fight against the worst forms of child labour. This is taking place in close co-operation with civil society, employers, trade unions, parents and children. These plans include providing training for the police and judicial authorities, immigration authorities, labour inspectors, judges, prosecutors, etc.

Fragmented dimensions of conflict



In some countries, child labour is also a result of social exclusion and discrimination of indigenous peoples, castes, and religious or ethnic minorities.

The Norwegian Government has published a Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Women and Children covering the period 2003-2005. This plan includes measures to:

- protect and help women and children who are the victims of human trafficking;
- prevent trafficking in women and children;
- investigate and punish trafficking in women and children;
- improve expertise and co-operation in order to fulfil the intentions of the plan.

Children and young people in armed conflict – changed security challenges

In the wake of the Cold War, the global security challenges have changed character. The number of internal conflicts within established national borders has increased, with large loss of civilian life and especially children and young people. More than one third of UN member states have recently experienced, are in the midst of, or are in danger of being drawn into armed conflict. The consequences are enormous, not only in the form of dead and injured people and physical destruction, but primarily because the prospects for development are weakened. International terrorism is affecting a growing number of children and young people and creating uncertainty about the future.

Norway regards peace-building as an important supplement to peace-

Article 38 (4) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

making and peace-keeping processes. Many of the elements of peace-building are the same as elements of development co-operation with countries that are not affected by conflict. In 2004 the Government launched the document *The Contribution of Development Policy to Peace-Building. A Strategic Framework for Norway's role*. The framework is relevant to children and young people in countries or regions where violent conflict is imminent, is in progress or has ended: children and young people are important actors in peace-building. With respect to the effects of armed conflict on children and young people, it is necessary to apply a clear gender perspective to understanding and measures for children and young people. By adopting Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000), Norway has committed itself to working on issues that especially affect girls and women in war and conflict.

The number of civilian war victims has increased dramatically, from 5 per cent to 90 per cent of all victims, in the last two decades. Between 1993 and 1996, 45 per cent of the people killed in conflict were children. Two million children have therefore been killed in armed conflict in the last ten years. More than one million children have been orphaned, and 800 children are killed or maimed each month by landmines. Access to and widespread use of handguns also makes children more "suitable" as soldiers. Children and young people are increasingly also becoming targets rather than arbitrary victims in conflicts. Studies show that when abuse takes place systematically over a long period of time without the people responsible being punished, which is typical in low-intensity conflicts, this prolongs children's traumas and leads to a feeling of hopelessness and a lack of faith in the future. Consequently, failing to prosecute the abusers also has an indirect effect on the situation of children.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), armed conflict and political violence are the most important causes of injury, poor health and physical disability. More than four million children are disabled because of this situation. In Afghanistan alone, 100,000 children have war-related disabilities, many caused by landmines. Due to the lack of basic services and the destruction of health facilities in wartime, disabled children receive little or no support. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Plan for Persons with Disabilities in Development Co-operation (1999) emphasises that support for landmine victims is a priority area.

In the early 1990s, the UN commissioned Graca Machel as an expert to undertake a study of children in armed conflict. In her 1996 report, she

points out that millions of children are killed as a result of armed conflict, but three times as many are seriously injured or permanently disabled. For many years, a great deal of work has been done to promote the preparation of an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the prohibition against participation in armed conflict of children under 18 years of age. This protocol has now been adopted and the age-limit for taking part in hostilities has been set at 18. Norway has ratified the protocol and it is important to promote its ratification by all countries.

The special situation of girls and young women in war and conflict

From conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina to Rwanda, girls and young women have been the victims of rape, imprisonment, torture and execution. Systematic rape, the most degrading of all abuse, has been documented in many armed conflicts, including in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cyprus, Haiti, Liberia, Somalia, Uganda and Sudan. Sexual abuse of girls and young women breaks down social structures more effectively than any weapons. Rape in wartime can trigger strong collective reactions, because in many situations abuse is regarded as a violation of the entire community. Abuse of the type has major consequences for physical and mental health. The spread of sexually transmissible diseases, including HIV and AIDS is also a possible consequence of rape. The children who are born as a result of such abuse and their mothers have a special need for protection and support. This means that increased support for families and local communities where girls and women have been the victims of rape is essential. The humanitarian organisations in particular will have to increase their efforts in this area.

Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on Women, Peace and Security contains many recommendations that concern girls and women in war and conflict and their special needs. Among other things, all parties to an armed conflict are requested to implement special measures to protect women and girls from sexual violence, especially rape and other sexual abuse. The resolution emphasises that the international community is responsible for ensuring that sexual violence and abuse of girls and women in armed conflict does not go unpunished. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has been established to ensure that such cases can also be tried and the perpetrators punished.

In areas of conflict where international peace-keeping forces and other forces are deployed, girls and women are also exposed to rape and other

Article 1 of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the prohibition against participation in armed conflict of children under 18 years of age states that:

States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities.

forms of abuse. An increasing amount of documentation from these areas shows that the people who are supposed to provide protection can also be abusers, and thus fail to provide basic protection for children and young people. It is important that ethical guidelines for all humanitarian personnel are enforced so that they do not exploit their position of power.

Child soldiers

Conflicts, natural disasters and economic crises can have a serious negative impact on families, and children in poor households. They are known to force children to do hazardous work and deprive them of their rights and the special protection they are entitled to under international humanitarian law.

According to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, approximately 300,000 children under the age of 18 are currently being used as soldiers. Some are recruited by force, others willingly take part in an ideological struggle to defend their own ethnic group, to defend themselves from violence by other soldiers, or to support themselves or their families. Child soldiers are mainly recruited from poor, marginalised groups. Many of them have been separated from their families. Children as young as ten have been recruited. They often begin as errand boys or girls, porters, cooks or scouts. Many of them are sexually abused and subjected to the same discipline and punishment as adults. They are forced to commit horrendous acts, including the punishment and execution of other children. This brutality damages them mentally as well as depriving them of education, family life, contact with their own local community and traditions, and health services.

The UN-expert Graca Machel appealed for children to be regarded as “peace zones”. In her 2000 report, she points out that despite the many commitments made to protect children “... it still remains for mankind to declare childhood inviolate”. A major UN conference in the same year adopted a 14-point plan of action to safeguard the rights of children in such situations. This plan urges all states to introduce measures to help children affected by war, to prosecute those who abuse children, to consider the effects of sanctions on children, and to offer special child defence units to peace-keeping forces. These recommendations must be put into practice immediately.

Children and violence

Every day, millions of children are beaten, kicked and slapped by adults. This type of violence is legal in many countries, where parents, teachers and the employees of penal institutions are permitted to use physical punishment on children. Drugs and alcohol are often a contributory factor in family violence. Violence against children is a clear breach of children's rights, as laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It calls for protection from all types of violence, respect for physical integrity and respect for children's dignity.

Until recently, governments, non-governmental organisations, vocational organisations and international institutions have consistently failed to regard violence against children as a human rights issue. Governments not only hesitate to intervene in the private sphere but also refuse to admit the prevalence and seriousness of this type of punishment. In the past decade, however, the extent and seriousness of adult treatment of children has been documented. A broad-based study of children and young people aged 10-20 in Alexandria, Egypt, found that more than one third were “disciplined” by beatings with hands, canes, belts or shoes. One quarter of these children reported that this had resulted in physical injury, including broken bones, loss of consciousness and permanent disability. These examples are not exceptional. Documentation from the Sudan, the Philippines, the USA, Ethiopia and Bangladesh reveals that children are exposed to violence, threats, public humiliation and torture on a daily basis.

Eight European nations have explicitly prohibited all forms of physical punishment of children. A growing number of countries, including Namibia, South Africa, Ethiopia, South Korea, New Zealand and Uganda have forbidden it in schools and child care institutions. However, passing laws does not automatically mean that they are respected. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has consistently urged governments to fulfil their obligation to protect children from physical and mental violence by introducing the necessary legislation. Zero tolerance has been emphasised as the guiding principle. Mental and social violence, as for example the stigmatisation of girls and women with HIV and AIDS, is overlooked in the laws and judicial systems of most countries. The same applies to forced marriage, child marriage and the murder of girl children.

There are many indications that the situation of disabled children is even worse. A recent study of 40,000 children revealed that disabled children experience more regular and widespread abuse than those who are not

Article 22 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.

International law regarding child labour

	General Minimum Age (Article 2)	Light work (Article 7)	Hazardous Work (Artikkel 3)
In normal circumstances	15 years or more (not less than compulsory school age)	13 years	18 years (16 years conditionally)
Where economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed	14 years	12 years	18 years (16 years conditionally)

ILO 1998

The UN's global study on violence against children will be published in 2005 and will contain new information on the situation and recommendations for follow-up by member states, the UN system, civil society and children. This work is headed by the independent Brazilian expert Paulo Sergio Pinheiro and financially supported by Norway.

Refugees and asylum-seekers

Armed conflicts have forced about 20 million children to leave their homes, either as refugees or as internally displaced persons. Such upheavals can be catastrophic for a child's development. They force children into poverty, in danger of malnutrition and poor health, ruin their possibilities for further education, deprive them of security, expose them to violence, force them to witness the death of family members, steal their childhood, and expose them to indescribable physical suffering and emotional and psychological damage.

Even when children flee and seek asylum in safe countries, their special needs are seldom taken into account in connection with asylum applications. Article 22 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children who seek asylum must "receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance". When unaccompanied children arrive at airports in host countries, little or no attention is paid to the strains they have suffered. They are often treated in the same way as adults. However, children's needs are not the same as those of adults. They need special treatment, in the form of a child-friendly interview room, adults who are used to talking to children, specially adapted information, and the appointment of a guardian to be responsible for providing help and assistance. They also need care, security and emotional support. In many countries,

child asylum-seekers are left to their own devices immediately after their application has been processed.

In refugee camps, girls and young women are especially vulnerable to hunger and exploitation, often because men take control of food distribution. Providers of food aid may also overlook the special nutritional needs of women and children. The health services are often deficient, which affects the health and life of infants and leads to high maternal mortality rates.

Children and young people in the judicial system

In urban communities all over the world, children and young people who live on the streets are especially exposed to abuse by the police and the judicial system. Because they are poor, they have few possibilities for defending themselves from such human rights violations. Their situation in prison is far worse than that of adults. They are denied the right to education and elementary health services and are highly exposed to drugs, sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS.

Most of these children do not belong in the judicial system. In the absence of a functioning social welfare system, however, prison or so-called "remedial institutions" are the only solution. Children and young people are thus trapped in a vicious circle of life on the streets and in institutions. They are isolated from other children and from any social network that may exist.

The situation of millions of children all over the world is serious. Both preventive and curative measures are necessary. In purely legal terms, efforts must be made to ensure that all countries establish a lower age-limit for criminal liability, and that age is taken into account in criminal cases. Norway has especially supported street children through the work of Norwegian and local non-governmental organisations.

In the decade between 1994 and 2003, Amnesty International registered 21 executions of children in six countries. Since 2000, executions have taken place in China, DR Congo, Iran, Pakistan and the USA. The Philippines and Sudan have also passed death sentences on children. Both the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights state that it is prohibited to execute persons who were under 18 years of age at the time the crime was committed, regardless of what they may be accused of. Norway will continue to bring up and protest about cases where minors risk the death penalty.

WHAT WILL NORWAY DO?

Child labour

- Norway will continue to give priority to preventing and combating child labour in the years ahead.
- We will focus on the worst forms of child labour, which involve trafficking in children, child soldiers, street children, orphans, children subject to sexual exploitation and children working as domestic servants.
- It is essential that child labourers are guaranteed the right to education and protection against exploitation and abuse, that their views are heard and that they are able through their own organisations to participate in policy-making and development measures.
- In its efforts to combat child labour, Norway will focus particularly on building alliances between international, national and local actors that can deal with the problems in a comprehensive and coherent way.
- In these efforts, Norway will in particular support programmes that provide accessible, secure and relevant primary education, including informal alternatives that can be combined with part-time employment.
- Norway will continue to provide support to multilateral organisations in order to ensure that these organisations take the fight against child labour seriously. Through earmarked contributions to ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank, Norway has helped to raise awareness of the importance of the fight against child labour in those organisations. It will be important to ensure that the organisations co-operate and continue the efforts that have been begun.
- Norway will work to ensure that the recently adopted additional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography is ratified by as many countries as possible. National legislation in our partner countries that secures the protection of children and prosecutes those who exploit children must be strengthened.

Children in armed conflict

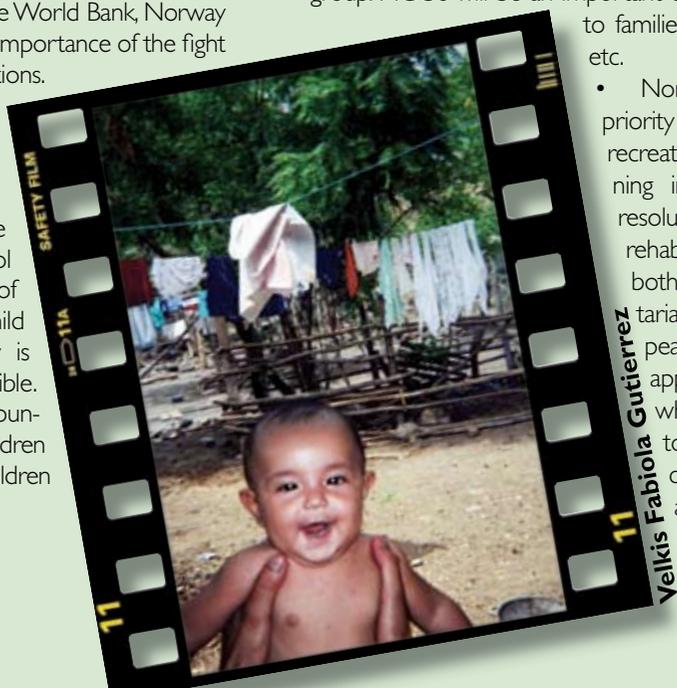
- Norway will continue its extensive economic, political and diplomatic efforts in Africa, Asia and Latin America to prevent armed conflict, promote peaceful solutions to conflicts and build lasting and stable peace.
- Children's special needs and rights should be included in peace negotiation, the mandates of peacekeeping operations and the planning and implementation of peacebuilding measures. Special attention must be focused on the situation of girls and children who are on their own. This requires personnel who have relevant professional expertise and the necessary authority. Peacekeeping operations should include special advisers who are responsible for safeguarding children's rights and needs. Ethical guidelines for all humanitarian personnel should be implemented.
- Norway will work to ensure that the additional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict is ratified by as many countries as possible. The same applies to Norway's obligations under Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security (2002).
- Norway will increase its support to children subject to violent conflict, both in terms of preventive protection and rehabilitation. It may be necessary to earmark assistance specifically for children in order to ensure that it reaches the target group. NGOs will be an important channel here in relation to families, the local community, etc.
 - Norway will give particular priority to educational and recreational programmes, training in non-violent conflict resolution and psycho-social rehabilitation for children, both as part of its humanitarian assistance and in its peacebuilding efforts. This applies particularly to girls who have been subject to violence in armed conflict, particularly rape and other sexual abuse. Children who are born

of rape and their mother will be particularly important target groups for Norwegian assistance.

- Norway will work to prevent the recruitment of children to armed forces and to promote the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers into their local communities.
- Norway will seek to ensure that children's rights and needs are safeguarded in humanitarian mine clearance measures.
- Norway will seek to ensure that programmes for refugees and internally displaced persons safeguard children's rights and needs, e.g. for psychological counselling services, schooling and tracing their families.

Children who are subject to violence

- Norway will support information and awareness-raising campaigns targeted at children, families, teachers and health personnel in local communities in order to prevent and deal with various forms of violence and sexual abuse of children. Particular attention will be focused on the situation of girls and young women, and boys and young men will also be an important target group.
- Norway will work to support the media's efforts in this field, particularly as regards the training of journalists.
- Norway will help its partner countries to strengthen their legislation and the capacity of their judiciary, police and prosecuting authority, and to train lawyers and police officers to combat various forms of violence and sexual abuse of children.
- Norway will work to ensure that all countries establish a minimum age for criminal liability and that age is taken into account in criminal cases.
- Norway will continue to take up and protest against cases where minors are sentenced to death.
- Norway will give priority to disseminating information and raising awareness among children, families, teachers and health personnel in the local community with a view to preventing various forms of violence and sexual abuse of children and young people. Special attention will be focused on children with disabilities.
- Norway will provide funding for and participate actively in the follow-up to the UN's global study on violence against children.





The Convention on the Rights of the Child attaches great importance to children's and young people's right to participate, their right to organise and their right to be heard on decisions affecting their lives. This means that children have the right to make their views known and to have them heard, to be taken seriously, to be informed, and to participate in decision-making processes that affect them at every level of society. Because the best way of learning about democracy is to practise it, the right of children and young people to participate is essential to the development of democracy and thus also in the fight against poverty. Given that almost half the world's population is under 24, decision-makers at every level of society must take account of the fact that children and young people are no longer only "our future". They are perhaps the most important actors of our time. This means that they must have a say about what is happening today.

Many of the countries with which Norway has development co-operation have weak democratic structures and little tradition of involving ordinary citizens in political processes. This applies especially to young people, both boys and girls. They are taught to listen to their elders and do as they decide. Even youth organisations often have an authoritarian trait and are dominated by adult leaders.

Article 13 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: *The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.*

Young people are often more open to new ideas, and have the energy and creativity to call for political and social change. However, in order to ensure that a growing number of young people all over the world are given the opportunity to play a role in the development of society, it is necessary to co-operate with adults and influence their attitudes. Therefore it is important for Norway as a donor country to identify and support democratic organisations in civil society where children and young people can play a role and take part in decision-making processes at both the local and the national level. We can also work at the international level to raise awareness of children's rights among national and local authorities. At the same time children should be given the opportunity for genuine participation in local decision-making bodies. More informal, temporary movements in both urban and rural areas that focus

specifically on particular matters relating to children's and young people's rights must also be recognised and supported.

Article 14 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: *States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.*

Children and young people can be important agents of cultural change in traditional communities in particular, since they are in closer contact with society outside the community. They are more receptive to the influences, both good and bad, of the international youth culture. There are a number of examples of children and young people who have shown the courage, will and ability to influence important political processes, as, for example, the schoolchildren of Soweto did when they rebelled against the government's education policy in 1976. Other examples are the Chinese students' demonstrations for democracy and freedom of expression in Tiananmen Square in 1989, and more recently the student opposition in Iran.

All development co-operation where the goal is to ensure that children and young people are able to grow up in a safe, secure and healthy environment requires co-operation between the public authorities and the voluntary sector. Children's and youth organisations are important participants in these efforts and the Norwegian authorities will work to ensure that the authorities in partner countries give children and youth who are members of voluntary organisations the opportunity to participate in political processes. Children's and youth organisations also provide a channel through which young people can express their views to the authorities at all levels.

Article 23 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: *States Parties recognise that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.*

Disabled children

Disability is both a cause and a consequence of poverty. It is unlikely to be possible to eliminate poverty in the world if priority is not given to the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

According to the UN, one in every twenty people is disabled. More than three quarters of them live in developing countries. They are usually



CHAPTER 6 THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATION

Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

(1) States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

(2) For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

among the poorest of the poor. Recent World Bank estimates indicate that they may account for as many as one in five of the world's impoverished people. Disability limits access to education and employment and leads to economic and social exclusion. Many poor disabled people are therefore caught in a vicious cycle of poverty and disability. Each is a cause and consequence of the other.

Disabled children and young people constitute an especially vulnerable group. The mortality rate for disabled children may be as high as 80 per cent in countries where total under-five mortality has dropped to less than 20 per cent. In certain cases processes take place that directly "weed out" disabled children. Disabled girls often experience double discrimination because of their gender.

Many disabilities could be prevented. Measures for mothers and children and raising the level of education for girls are especially important. Achievement of the international goals for economic, social and human development could directly reduce the number of disabled persons in many poor countries. However, general improvements in living standards will not be enough. Special measures are still required, not only to prevent disabilities but also to ensure that disabled persons are able to participate fully in development processes, receive their fair share of the benefits of progress and claim their rights as full and equal members of society.

With respect to services for the disabled, the results are better when such services are provided within existing institutions and social structures (social, educational and working life) and where procedures are established to ensure that disabled people are heard.

A rights-based approach to disability and development entails the right to represent oneself. The rights of disabled persons are best safeguarded by people who have similar problems themselves. The growth of a democratic, representative movement for disabled persons is a way of ensuring that the authorities' approach is commensurate to the needs and rights of disabled people. It may also help to ensure that target groups participate in planning process and in the implementation and monitoring of all development activities for disabled people, and to ensure that obstacles to participation and efforts to combat discriminatory policies and practices are eliminated. This also applies to children and young people. It is especially important for them to have the opportunity to organise and have a voice in the struggle for recognition of which they are a part.

Article 31 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

Norway has adopted a Plan of Action for Disabled Persons in Development Co-operation (1999), which has been followed up in the World Bank and elsewhere. In the World Bank, Norway has put disability on the development policy agenda by financing a special fund to strengthen the Bank's work in this field. For Norway's government-to-government co-operation, a special checklist and indicators have been formulated to ensure that disability is a topic that is integrated in all Norwegian development co-operation. The international negotiations on a UN convention on the rights of disabled persons also present an important opportunity for Norway to promote the children's and young people's perspective.

Human rights education essential

In an investigation in connection with the development of this strategy undertaken in Norway's seven main partner countries (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) into the situation of children and young people, one important common factor was identified: a fundamental lack of knowledge of human rights and the rights of the child among the population at large. If a human rights approach is to have any meaning, it is a prerequisite that the country's citizens know their rights. One crucial task for Norway's development

The goals of Norway's Plan of Action are as follows:

- The main goal is social integration of disabled persons.

Development co-operation must:

- help ensure that the rights and needs of disabled persons are fulfilled;
- help ensure that disabled persons are respected on a par with the rest of the population;
- help ensure that issues relating to the situation in which disabled persons find themselves is defined and taken into account in both bilateral and multilateral development co-operation;
- help ensure that measures for disabled persons are included in ordinary services in all sectors;
- efforts for disabled persons must be reinforced in priority partner countries. These efforts comprise both measures for disabled persons through ordinary services and special measures, as well as policy dialogue with certain partner countries on giving priority to the rights of disabled persons.

co-operation is therefore to help improve human rights education in schools, organisations, workplaces and through the media. In this respect, children and young people are especially important bearers of knowledge to their homes and local communities.

Art, culture and play

The right of children and young people to rest and leisure, to play and take part in developing activities adapted to their age, and to freely take part in cultural life and the arts, is set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 31). Access to literature and the opportunity to read undisturbed helps children to develop their skills and to understand language, and to expand their horizons with greater understanding and tolerance. Taking part in theatrical, musical and artistic activities gives children a possibility to express themselves and be creative. For many children, active participation provides an opportunity to resolve personal traumas and negative experiences and to deal with grief and personal loss. Play, games and other forms of expression also enable them to communicate their hopes, dreams and views to others. This gives especially vulnerable groups the opportunity to combat stigmatisation and discrimination. Children's play and games are

means of socialising the next generation. Social conflicts are also played out in games.

Sport

Providing support for Sport for All is an approach Norway has increasingly introduced for especially vulnerable groups of children in its development co-operation, in order to promote their mental and physical health. In the Middle East, the Balkans and many countries in Africa, Norway has supported children's and young people's own organisations and, through competitions and tournaments, promoted understanding and reconciliation across ethnic, cultural and racial borders. Young people find it easier to cross ethnic barriers and national borders. Historical prejudices and traumas often recede into the background if common activities that unite people can be promoted. Norwegian sports organisations, clubs and teams have increasingly engaged in organisational co-operation with partners in developing countries in recent years, including in connection with efforts to combat racism in their own communities. Schools are especially important in promoting sport for all.

“YOU MAKE AN EFFORT – WE MAKE AN EFFORT”

Mathare in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, is one of the biggest slums in Africa. Approximately 500,000 people live there and more than half of them are less than 20 years old. The conditions they live in are unworthy of human beings. The main characteristics are poverty, pollution, crime and disease. But hope, involvement and a great deal of pride have been generated among the citizens of Mathare, and the reason is football – “cheza mpira”. In fifteen years, the club at the heart of Mathare has moved from the bottom to the top of the country's league tables. The team currently heads the elite division in Kenya. In the African championships, which were recently arranged in Tunis, Mathare had six players on Kenya's national team. The miracle that is called the Mathare Youth Sports Association

(MYSA) was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003 and is a model for sports organisation all over the world.

The MYSA was founded in 1987 by Bob Munroe and a few young people. Today, more than 15,000 girls and boys are members, divided between about 700 football teams. The players, team leaders, referees and trainers all have equal decision-making rights. The MYSA is a democratic organisation.

The MYSA's motto is “You make an effort – we make an effort. You do nothing – we do nothing”. Demands are made on all members. The basic message of the MYSA's work is that it is possible to do something with your own life. This has led to greater interest in education. The members of the MYSA are models in a community that needs healthy ideals.

Participation and making an effort are key values in the club. As well as football, the MYSA runs several development projects in the slums, in the form of HIV/AIDS campaigns and educational projects for young people in prison. One of the main activities is the environmental campaign, in which everyone has to take part. The teams collect garbage that is then driven away. Their efforts are rewarded with points on the league table on a par with winning a football match.

Through the Strømme Foundation, the Norwegian Football Association (NFF) and the MYSA's friends in Brumunddal, Norway has provided support for sports and development activities in Mathare in the same way as it supports the NFF's peace and reconciliation efforts, using football as a tool, in the Balkans or the gift of “football pens” to Vietnam.. Sport for All is an important development tool.

It is important to support the intrinsic value of sport, in the form of the joy and opportunities for expression, inclusion, personal development and achievement that it represents. For girls and young women, sport is an arena that can make a significant contribution towards promoting gender equality.

However, young sporting talents in poor countries have become a “trade product” that can be bought cheap and sold dear to agents and clubs in rich countries. They are often offered terms that smack of abuse and exploitation. Both the Norwegian authorities and sports organisations must be aware of the growing international trend towards “sport trafficking”.

The rights of indigenous peoples – the situation of children and young people

In recent years, indigenous issues have received an increasing amount of national and international attention. Significant progress has been made in promoting indigenous rights. In this process, indigenous children and young people have not received the attention they deserve. They have been overshadowed by more overarching issues relating to other rights and political representation.

When traditional structures are broken down due to external pressure, in the form of environmental changes, economic exclusion, migration, exploitation or armed conflict, indigenous children are especially vulnerable. Far too often, indigenous children and young people end up in extreme poverty, do not attend school, and are more exposed to disease, child mortality, violence, abuse and exploitation.

Article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child underlines the right of children belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to practice their own culture and religion and use their own language. It is essential to a child's future development that it learns to read and write in its own language. This enables the child to develop confidence in its own identity, which is a prerequisite for understanding and respecting other cultures.

Norway bases its support for indigenous peoples on a human rights-based approach. Fundamentally, this has to do with people's right to continue to live in a traditional way and maintain their cultural identity. By promoting the rights of indigenous children and young people, we also ensure that their way of life can continue to exist. The Guidelines for Norway's Efforts to Strengthen Support for Indigenous Peoples in Development Co-operation

(2004) reflect the fact that Norway has been active in the preparation of international guidelines for indigenous peoples. For many years, Norway has also supported measures and programmes to promote the rights of indigenous peoples and improve their living standards at country level. These efforts will be strengthened. Norway wishes to promote a coherent approach in Norway's efforts for indigenous peoples and to increase the integration of indigenous considerations into other parts of its development co-operation. In this context, children and young people are an important target group. The Saami Parliament and the Saami people's own organisations have an important role to play in contributing to such integration.

Exchange for co-operation

The Norwegian Volunteer Service (now entitled Fredskorpset, or FK Norway) was established in the 1960s on the principle of “Teach to Help”. It was re-established in 2000 on the basis of a new principle: “Work to Learn”. The exchange of expertise between young people in the North and the South is an important basis for the activities of the FK Norway. The organisation no longer sends out personnel itself but helps companies, public and private agencies, institutions, organisations and friendship groups in the North and South to exchange personnel and experts. To FK Norway, development assistance means opening doors for actors who are not engaged in traditional development co-operation. On the human level, it enables people to cross borders, develop ties and exchange knowledge. At the institutional level, companies and organisations gain access to new markets and expertise, and to acquire knowledge of international conditions.

The youth programme is one of the organisation's four programmes. It targets young people in the 18-25 age group and bases its activities on exchanges and partnerships between organisations, etc. in Norway and developing countries. Several young people travel together in large or small groups. The focus is on changing attitudes and the participants commit themselves to informing people about their experiences and the lessons they have learned when they return home.

FK Norway also has South-South programmes, which promote co-operation between partners in two or more developing countries, especially in areas where Norway has limited expertise and capacity.

Article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

(1) The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

The registration of children – a prerequisite for participation

If a child is not registered immediately after birth, it may be excluded from the right to be vaccinated, start school or be entitled to food rations. Some children born in refugee camps in a country that is in a state of civil war, or in an ethnic minority, are in fact stateless. In the long term, the consequence may be that they are denied the possibility to marry, have a passport, own land, open a bank account or start a commercial enterprise. Without evidence of its age, a child may be conscripted into the army, forced into child labour or a victim of slave traders.

All over the world, millions of children are not registered at birth. The actual number is unknown. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the right to be registered at birth (Article 7) because a birth certificate is the entry ticket to citizenship. Without it, there is no official record of the child's existence. It therefore forfeits all

Hip Hop as an agent of change

Many youth sub-cultures in urban areas all over the world originate in the kinds of conditions described above. They have many characteristics in common, and Hip Hop is one of them. Originating in the urban slums in North America, it is beginning to develop from a musical genre into a social movement. It is both a product of and a reaction to globalisation, and is a powerful political voice. The most popular artists rap about social and economic issues and environmental problems, and they make a strong contribution to awareness-raising in their local communities.

Through the Hip Hop project "Messenger of Truth", UN-HABITAT's urban youth meet for dialogue on the Millennium Development Goals, their rights, how they can enter into dialogue with local authorities, and what they can do themselves to improve their lives. Young slum-dwellers are influential agents of social change and it is important to support them. Hip Hop is their own form of expression.

the advantages and protection that the state is obliged to provide.

At the national level, too, the lack of registration of children has serious consequences. If the number of children and their birth data are unknown, a government is unable to calculate the child mortality rate, the percentage of children registered in schools or the number of vaccines necessary to protect its children. Proper planning and monitoring of national policies for children is therefore difficult.

Registration of births is a major challenge for poor countries that lack trained personnel, have inadequate administrative systems and face strong opposition to such registration from families and clans. The UN agencies that are particularly responsible for this issue are UNICEF and the UNFPA, which have been working on simplified systems for registering births.

Formal rights – a challenge for young people

Due to the absence of property rights and legal protection for young entrepreneurs in the informal sector, they cannot turn their assets into capital and invest it in production and the creation of income and new jobs. Micro-credits combined with guidance in the field of production and marketing can play an important role in incorporating young entrepreneurs into the formal market. By setting up their own business organisations and alliances with progressive banking and financial institutions, young people can make a significant contribution towards influencing the framework conditions for production and employment.

The crucial role of the media

The media have an important role to play in developing attitudes and values in society. Particularly children who are seeking their own identity in a changing society, sometimes in opposition to their parents and traditions, are easily influenced. The Convention on the Rights of the Child addresses the medias' responsibility for children in a separate article. Children's integrity should be respected by the media. Far too often, children are described as problems, as helpless, dependent and incapable of improving their situation. This confirms the impression of children as objects that adults must act on behalf of and take care of, with no capacity, rights or duties of their own.

Children are entitled to be given information in order to take part in social development and understand and form an opinion about what is

Article 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, first sentence, states that:

States parties recognise the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

happening. Children should also be given access to the media in order to present their views on their own situation. In connection with the support for free media that Norway now provides, priority should be given to the voices of children and young people. Children and young people should be enabled to produce their own publications, radio programmes or other information channels.

When contact with the outside world increases and information about other values and other ways of life is spread, traditional cultural patterns are often weakened. The roles and responsibilities of children and young people are changed and old norms and rules are modernised. Children are important bearers of new ideas and can contribute to development and change. However, we know that children risk being exploited because they lack experience and knowledge. Media companies and institutions therefore have a responsibility to protect children from the speculative, commercial and exploitative forces that exist in the media world.

The Norwegian model

“Children and young people must have more influence in school, leisure activities, the local community, and public planning and decision-making processes. It is a matter of prioritising resources, of playgrounds and school roads, of day care and education services, of culture and leisure, of health and social policy – and of ensuring education and housing, development and employment. Public authorities and non-governmental organisations face major challenges in their efforts to ensure that children and young people have more influence. This does not mean that children and young people must make decisions in important social areas on their own, but that account must be taken of their ideas, thoughts and suggestions in both planning and policy formulation, and in day-to-day work in various arenas.”

Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. Report No. 39 to the Storting (2001-2002): The conditions in which children and young people live and grow up in Norway.

Article 15 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: States Parties recognise the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

Norway has developed systems to promote the participation and influence of children and young people in schools, in local democracy and through voluntary children's and youth organisations. The Ombudsman for Children system, as Norway has developed it, has also been "exported" to many countries, where it has aroused a great deal of interest. As the above quotation shows, however, we are facing important tasks. Our experience may be useful for partner countries in the South, but we may also have something to learn. Promoting this type of mutual learning will be an essential element of the follow-up to this strategy.



Ruth Mangani

WHAT WILL NORWAY DO?

- Norway will seek to ensure through national and local authorities, NGOs, and the appropriate UN agencies that young people are protected during the transition from childhood to adult life. Girls and young women are a particularly important target group in this connection.
- We will give priority to critically vulnerable groups of young people on the basis of analyses of the situation in the partner country concerned.
- We will focus particularly on indigenous and minority children where relevant.
- We will support, through UNICEF and UNFPA, measures for improving the registration of children at birth.

Political and civil participation

- Norway will help children and young people to have real influence and participation in decision-making processes in schools, workplaces and leisure activities, so that they can promote their interests in matters that concern them. Participation by girls and young women will be given particular emphasis.
- We will seek to ensure that all Norway's partner countries have an institution that children can go to and that safeguards their interests. Norway will work to ensure that more countries appoint a commissioner for children.
- We will support, through national Norwegian children and youth organisations, including Fredskorps Ung, competence and capacity building in democratic organisations in partner countries.
- We will intensify efforts to ensure that children's and young people's voices are heard in connection with the various forms of policy dialogue, PRSPs and the planning of specific development measures.
- We will ensure that the authorities and international organisations establish meeting-places for children and young people that will allow them to participate and give them genuine influence.

Economic participation

- Norway will seek to strengthen the property rights and legal rights of young entrepreneurs.
- We will seek to ensure that the public services in partner countries take account of children and young people, for example advisory services in the agricultural sector, credit and savings schemes and health care services.

Access to the media and other information

- Norway will seek to ensure that children and young people are given access to the media and other channels of information so that they can express their opinions, their attitudes and their culture.
- Through Norwegian support for the media, Norway will seek to ensure that information is made available to children and young people.





7

CHAPTER 7 FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

Agents and arenas for change

Charity will not solve the world's poverty problems. Nor will it improve the situation of children and young people. To do this we must tackle with the causes of poverty at every level – globally, nationally, locally and within the family. The Norwegian white paper Fighting Poverty Together has identified four fronts on which poverty must be fought: reform of the international framework conditions, donor reform, governance reform in developing countries and mobilisation of the private and voluntary sectors. The present development strategy for children and young people is part of this holistic approach to development policy.

In order to fight the poverty that affects children more effectively, we must understand the processes that create poverty and the mechanisms behind exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination. This relates to international structures on a higher level and also to the national and local levels. We must identify the agents and arenas for change so that we can support them on their own terms. Norway wants to contribute to this and the present strategy is a step on the way towards greater understanding of the problems facing children and young people in poor countries. In the strategy we also propose specific measures. The goal is “a world fit for children”.

What the development administration can do

The administration of development of co-operation will be tailored in such a way as to make it possible to realise the aims of the strategy, the objectives of the Children's Convention and the Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by 2015. This applies to the Foreign Ministry, Norad, and the foreign service missions. The following measures are to be implemented:

- A special ambassador for children's rights will be appointed to promote and co-ordinate development policy efforts to promote respect for the rights and welfare of children and young people at the bilateral and multilateral levels and in relation to civil society. Instructions regarding the role and tasks of the ambassador will be drawn up.
- Each department and foreign service mission involved in development policy and/or development co-operation will appoint a person to be responsible for matters relating to children and young people.

These persons will form a network headed by the ambassador for children's rights and will maintain contact with each other and meet at regular intervals. They will be responsible for ensuring that children and young people are included in decision-making processes concerning the use of development assistance funds that affect them.

- The checklist annexed to the strategy will be used by the development administration in connection with activities/measures relating to the rights and welfare of children and young people. The ambassador for children's rights will have a special responsibility to monitor the use of the checklist.
- Norwegian development assistance to critically vulnerable groups of children and young people will be increased during the period 2006-2012 on the basis of a baseline study that will be conducted in 2005, and of analyses made in the partner countries and organisations concerned. These activities and the general implementation of the strategy will be evaluated halfway through the period, in 2009, and then at the end of the period, in 2012.
- Employees will receive training in the implications of a children's rights-based approach and in how to systematise and strengthen activities in this field.
- Systematic analyses will be made in partner countries and multilateral organisations with a view to identifying the most important agents of change within the framework of annual work plans and action plans.
- A special forum for dialogue between the Foreign Ministry and Norwegian children and youth organisations will be set up. Organisations in the South, and Fredskorpset Ung volunteers working in the South may also be invited. The forum will meet twice a year to discuss issues relating to development assistance for children and young people.
- Norwegian voluntary organisations will be encouraged to make greater efforts to develop strategic partnerships and promote organisational development in children, youth and student organisations in partner countries.
- In partner countries where this is appropriate, Norway will take the initiative for closer co-ordination of issues related to development co-operation with regard to children and young people.

APPENDIX

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International Federation Terre des Hommes, (2004).

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<http://www.unesco.org>
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Education in emergency situations – useful reference material may be found on:
<http://www.ineesite.org>
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Geeta Guptas speech I from 2000 is important:
Gender, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS: The What, the Why, and the How.
http://www.icrw.org/docs/durban_hivaid_speech700.pdf

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World Health Report, WHO:

<http://www.who.int/whr/2004/en/>

The World Health Organisation report on violence and health.

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/

How to implement/realise the recommendations in the report on violence and health:

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/media/news/08_09_2004/en/

State of the World's Vaccines and Immunizations (2003 Revised Edition).

http://www.who.int/vaccines-documents/DocsPDF04/wwwSOWV_E.pdf

For information concerning progress in relation to the MDGs in the field of water and sanitation:

<http://www.irc.nl/page/12932>

UNAIDS has a well-equipped website containing the latest information on HIV/AIDS, for example:

<http://www.unaids.org/wad2004/report.html>

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APPENDIX

CHECKLIST

The checklist is designed to improve efforts to promote children's and young people's rights in Norwegian development co-operation and other international efforts and make them more targeted. The checklist also ensures that there is a focus on children and young people in political processes and practical development assistance.

The main task at the political level is to promote and safeguard children's rights. The focus is on ensuring that the efforts of agents of change to implement these rights are affected by policy decisions at the national and international levels, for example how policies are contributing to reaching the MDGs.

At the practical level the focus is on preventing violations of children's rights, and on whether the activity in question is likely to promote children's and young people's rights and improve their living conditions. The questions are intended to draw attention to the positive and negative impacts the various forms of assistance and activities may have on children's health and education, and to whether the children and young people themselves are able to express their desires and views and thus influence their environment. Another factor is whether the activity in question may contribute to economic exploitation and what effect it has on the ability of parents and guardians to care for children. The questions are intended to prevent international efforts from resulting in discrimination on the basis of sex, skin colour, degree of disability or other differences.

The questions will also make it possible to assess whether policy decisions and measures are likely to have a positive or negative impact, or no impact at all. There are three alternative answers: positive impact, negative impact and no change. The questions concerning whether human rights are being violated may be answered by Yes or No.

All answers may be accompanied by comments on the need for follow-up. The checklist can thus be used as a first step in the assessment of whether policy decisions or international assistance should be reformulated or adjusted in order to better safeguard children's rights or living conditions.

IMPACT ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Assessments of effects and rights focus		Impact of policy	Rights focus in activities	Follow up/ Comments
		Positive change PI	Yes	
		No Change NC	No	
		Negative change NI	Not Applicable na	
		No Information Available nia		
Policy level		PROMOTION AND PROTECTION		
1. Will this policy strengthen institutions and actors working for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, for instance a Ombudsman, NGOs working for child rights protection, child account systems, etc?				
2. Will this policy explicitly enhance MDG 2, to achieve universal primary education by 2015?				
3. Will this policy explicitly enhance MDG 4, to reduce by two thirds, the under-five mortality rate between 1990 and 2015?				
4. Will this policy explicitly enhance children's physical environment (CRC articles 3 and 6)?				
5. Will this policy explicitly enhance children's freedom to organize or assemble peacefully including participation in cultural activities (CRC articles 15 and 31)?				
6. Will this policy influence children's awareness of and education in human rights (CRC article 42)?				
7. Is a reformulation of this policy (e.g., a PRSP, a Sector Program, a Budget Support, preparation for policy dialogue, policy papers) likely to better address key risks confronting children in the society?				
8. Is the formulation of an action plan for children, incl. monitoring mechanisms, likely to make this policy conducive with state responsibilities under the CRC?				
Activity level		PROMOTION		
9. Do children affected by the activity have opportunities to express their views and opinions freely, and are their views given due weight in the planning and implementation of the activity (CRC articles 12 and 13)?				
10. Does the activity enhance the capacity of public or private institutions to promote and protect the rights of the child?				
11. Does the activity enhance the rights of children without discrimination as to gender, race, colour, language, religion, disabilities or other differences in status (CRC article 2)?				
12. Has this activity been explicitly checked for not harming the rights of the child to health and adequate nutritious standards, including clean drinking water (CRC article 24)?		"NO-HARM" PRINCIPLE		
13. Has this activity been explicitly checked for not harming the right of the child to primary education, and the likelihood of influencing the drop-out rate (CRC articles 28 and 29)?				
14. Has this activity been explicitly checked for upholding the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation, and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous for the child's development, including interfering negatively with the child's education (CRC article 32)?				
15. Has this activity been explicitly checked for not harming parents' or other customary or legal guardians' capability for child care, including exercising appropriate direction and guidance to the child in exercising its human rights (CRC article 5)?				
Follow up	Supplementary information	Limited study	Full scale analysis	
Type of data required				

APPENDIX

SOME OF THE MILESTONES IN EFFORTS TO PROMOTE THE RIGHTS AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN

- The children's rights movement began in the early 1920s when British pioneer Eglantyne Jebb founded the Save the Children Fund. She convinced the League of Nations that children's rights should have a central place on the international co-operation agenda.
- The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) was established in 1946 as an emergency relief organisation and not as a tool for promoting economic development. It was believed that problems in connection with children's development, health, nutrition and education would best be dealt with in the longer term by specialised agencies such as the FAO, the WHO and UNESCO.
- The UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1959.
- In the 1960s, UNICEF and other organisations working for children shifted their focus from the "starving children issue" towards a more coherent approach to meeting children's needs. They aimed to safeguard the interests of children by promoting economic and social development. There was focus on improving children's health by funding water and sanitation projects.
- The growing gap between poor and rich countries and peoples led to a search for alternative approaches. UNICEF led these efforts, in close co-operation with the WHO. In 1976, with the ILO, they presented a new programme philosophy, a strategy for meeting basic needs. Local participation was regarded as a key element of this strategy. Combating illiteracy among women and promoting women's projects that would generate income

were considered to be increasingly important in efforts to reduce child malnutrition.

- The International Year of the Child in 1979 led to greater interest, especially among non-governmental organisations, in the living conditions of street children in the growing slums of the world's major cities. Attention was also focused on other groups of children, such as children with hearing, sight and speech impairments and mentally retarded children. There was also focus on drug abuse, child labour and sexual abuse of children.
- During the International Year of the Child, the Declaration on the Rights of the Child was used as the main theme and guideline by many national Year of the Child committees.
- Ten years later, in 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN. Two optional protocols were adopted in 2002.
- The Third Decade of Development (1980-1990) was gradually strongly affected by the privatisation and structural adjustment policies of the international financial institutions. School fees and consumer taxes gradually had a direct, negative impact on the well-being of women and children in the poorest countries. UNICEF was a strong, consistent critic of this policy.
- The Children's Summit in 1990 reflected the end of the Cold War, and democracy and human rights were the order of the day, for children and young people as well. The many conflicts and increasing tensions in many young nations led to growing focus on the problems of children and young people in such contexts. The HIV/AIDS epidemic began to cast dark shadows, especially in Africa.
- The World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 specifically put girls and women on the agenda and stressed that the rights of girls and women are an integral part of universal human rights.

- In the second half of the 1990s, child labour became a central theme, alongside child trafficking, sexual abuse, female genital mutilation, etc.
- The UN's eight Millennium Development Goals were unanimously adopted at the Millennium Summit in 2000. Six of the goals are directly relevant to children.
- The UN Special Session on Children in 2002 was held to report on what had been achieved in the past decade and draw up a new, common plan of action for the period up to 2015. The plan of action safeguards the rights of all children and focuses on children in especially difficult situations. They include children affected by armed conflict, child refugees, children who are exploited through child labour and prostitution, and children who are exposed to sexual violence and trafficking. The final document, A World Fit for Children, contains 21 goals for child health, education and protection and thus incorporates the UN Millennium Development Goals.

The Plan of Action commits countries to:

- putting in place, as appropriate, effective national legislation, policies and action plans, and allocating resources to fulfil and protect the rights and secure the well-being of children;
- establishing or strengthening national bodies, such as, inter alia, independent ombudspersons for children, where appropriate, or other institutions for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child;
- developing national monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the impact of our actions on children;
- enhancing widespread awareness and understanding of the rights of the child (section 31).



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