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Meeting 2 Background Guide

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Overview of UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was created by the UN General Assembly in 1946 in order to allocate food and healthcare to children and their families in countries devastated by World War II. UNICEF became a permanent part of the UN system in 1953 when its name was shortened from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund to the United Nations Children's Fund. UNICEF plays a critical role in the protection and empowerment of children globally, as well as in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). UNICEF currently works in over 190 countries and territories through programmes as the world's lead agency for children and their rights. UNICEF seeks to address a wide range of topics regarding children, including achieving child and adolescents specific targets under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) and advocating for children's rights. UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, safe water and sanitation, quality basic education for all, and the protection of children from violence and exploitation.

UNICEF Structure

The Executive Board serves as the highest level of UNICEF's administrative management. The Board determines and approves all activities, policies, country programmes, and budgetary decisions. The Executive Board is composed of 36 Member States who are elected for three-year terms by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with elections occurring each year. The Executive Board allocates eight seats to Africa, seven seats to Asia, four seats to Eastern Europe, five seats to Latin America and the Caribbean, and 12 seats to Western Europe and Others. Resources to UNICEF's programmes mainly come from the voluntary contributions of governments and intergovernmental organizations. Moreover, UNICEF is one of the sustainable UN agencies which has multiple funding sources as notably, one-quarter comes from individual and private sector donations. UNICEF allocates over 90% of its annual budget to field operations and upholds the mission of realizing the rights of every child, especially the most vulnerable. UNICEF's contributions to country programs consist of Regular Resources (RR) and Other Resources (OR). The RR is funded from each government after deliberations by the UNICEF Executive Board, which is used flexibly for children wherever and whenever the need is greatest.

Meanwhile, RR is allocated to each country office and regional offices after determining priorities based on the following three indicators criteria; under-five mortality rate, income level (Gross National Income per capita), child population. Setting those indicators have aimed to ensure that the highest priority is given to those children most in need. However, there have been some arguments whether such RR allocation criteria should be reviewed to be more in line with the current global challenges and landscape since resources may not be sufficiently distributed to certain countries in need. The OR is often allocated according to the donors' priorities and specific purposes, emergency response needs and projections, which may also impose some challenges from ownership perspectives. [The integrated budget for 2022-2025](#), an integral part of the [UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#), contains the resources that will contribute to the achievement of the [UNICEF Integrated Results and Resources Framework](#). The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022-2025 sets out measurable results for children and forms the basis of all the country's programmes. It charts a course towards inclusive recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, attainment of the SDGs, and the realization of a society in which every child is included and has their rights fulfilled. Of the \$23.3 billion available for programmes during 2022-2025, \$21.6 billion (93%) will be channeled through country programme implementation.

UNICEF Mandate and Functions

UNICEF highlights the importance of an equity, inclusion and lifecycle approach to realizing the rights of every child, including adolescents, to make sure no one is left behind. UNICEF has a mandate to advocate for the protection of children's rights and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standard of behavior towards children. That mandate is rooted in the 1989 CRC, which is the first set of legally binding rights to apply to every child. The CRC and the CEDAW gain particular importance for UNICEF's work. Both have been widely ratified and they are mutually reinforcing, especially in the promotion and protection of the human rights of girls and women and in the prevention of discrimination on the basis of gender. UNICEF operates balancing development, emergency humanitarian operations and child rights advocacy. UNICEF is active in over 190 countries and National Committees which promotes child rights both in developing and developed countries. Currently there are 33 National Committees in the world, each established as an independent local non-governmental organization and they mobilize one-fourth of UNICEF funds from individuals and private sectors. [The Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action \(CCCs\)](#) are the core UNICEF policy and framework for humanitarian action guided by international humanitarian and human rights law including the CRC, which are at the heart of its work upon upholding the rights of children affected by humanitarian crises, and are mandatory for all UNICEF personnel to follow. It also contributes to the SDGs and includes a clear strategy for linking humanitarian and development activities which is a new approach referred to as the *Humanitarian-Development Nexus* (HDN), strengthening local capacities and systems, and building resilience at all stages of humanitarian operations. UNICEF's humanitarian action includes interventions aimed at saving

lives, alleviating suffering, preserving human dignity, and protecting the rights of victims wherever humanitarian needs exist, regardless of the type of crisis, the country's gross national income level, or the legal status of the affected population.

Key Resolutions / Conventions for the Conference Theme

[Declaration of the Rights of the Child](#), known as the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child, is an international document promoting child rights, adopted by the League of Nations in 1924, and adopted in an extended form by the United Nations in 1959. The Declaration guarantees inalienable human rights for all children. The declaration aims to defend their right to education, and promote the healthy growth and development of every child. It sets forth 10 principles for all children so they can lead good and happy lives.

[Convention of the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#) was adopted by the UN General Assembly (GA) in resolution 44/25 on 20 November 1989, which entered into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49. The CRC serves as a guiding document and a major step forward for the international community as it sets the mandate to protect the rights of every child. The States Parties make a promise to every child to protect and fulfill their rights, by adopting this international legal framework. All the children's rights and government responsibilities and principles and provisions of the Convention are explained. The Convention sets out universal and indivisible rights that apply to every child and cannot be taken away from children. Anchored to CRC, the following optional protocols have been approved.

- [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography](#)
- [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict](#)
- [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure](#)

[Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 to end poverty, reduce inequality and build more peaceful, prosperous societies by 2030. Also known as the Global Goals, the SDGs are a call to action to create a world where no one is left behind. The SDGs cannot be achieved without the realization of children's rights. As world leaders work to realize the 2030 commitments, children around the world are standing up to secure their rights to health, quality education, a clean planet, and more. The future of tomorrow's leaders, our children, depends on what we do today to secure their rights for all of us. UNICEF is working with governments, partners and other UN agencies to help countries ensure that the Goals deliver results for and with every child, now and for future generations.

Basic Research Sources

- [CIA World Factbook - Country Profiles](#)

- [Countries & Regions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](#)
- [UNICEF Country Program Documents](#)
- [The UNESCO Institute for Statistics \(UIS\)](#)
- [World Development Indicators | Data bank](#)
- [UNICEF Data](#)

Conference Theme: Realizing Rights for all Children and Adolescents

As UNICEF is the leading agency for children within the UN systems, its role is to protect the rights for children and adolescents all over the world. Today, children are deprived of education and quality learning for various reasons, including gender, poverty, disability, and many others, which allow children to face considerable barriers to employment and earning potential later in life. Improving the quality education positively affects them developing their ability to shape a better future for themselves and their societies. In terms of healthcare, millions of children are still losing their lives from causes that can be prevented with quality healthcare and adequate health systems. Vulnerable groups including women and children living in poverty, violence, and emergency settings are especially likely to be cut off from services they need to survive and thrive. Furthermore, children and adolescents experience insidious forms of violence, exploitation and abuse, happening in the places such as homes, schools and online in every country. Violence against children negatively attacks physically, emotionally and sexually. Regardless of the circumstance, every child has to be protected as per their human rights.

According to the CRC, children means every human being below the age of 18, counting 2.4 billion in the world. Member States shall respect and ensure their right without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. Today, there are 1.3 billion adolescents in the world, representing 16% of the total world's population. Adolescents, as defined by the United Nations, are those between the ages of 10 and 19, who experience a transition period between childhood and adulthood, with significant growth and development. As children up to the age of 19, most adolescents are protected under the CRC, however, their vulnerabilities and needs often remain unaddressed.

Meeting 1 Theme: Improving the Quality of Education for all Children and Adolescents

As the CRC ensures, a child's right to education entitles the right to learn. However, for many children and adolescents across the globe, children and adolescents are often deprived of education and quality learning opportunities for various reasons. There also exists inequality in access to education for certain groups of people. Without access to better education, children face considerable barriers to employment and earning potential later in life, threatening their ability to shape a better future for themselves and their societies. Improving the quality of education

further promotes and realizes their potential as a tool for transforming societies and economies. UNICEF supports basic education, including primary and secondary.

Meeting 2 Theme: Ensuring Access to Healthcare for all Children and Adolescents

As every child has the right to survive and thrive, a lot of progress in child and maternal health has been achieved over the past decades. However, millions of children are still dying from causes with inequality in healthcare and weak health systems. Across the world, many children are likely to be cut off from services they need to survive and thrive, and have greater risk of disease and malnutrition during conflict, natural disaster and other crises. Ensuring access to healthcare for all children and adolescents requires a global shift to strengthening health systems and services so that all children have access to affordable and quality health care.

Meeting 3 Theme: Enhancing the Protection of all Children and Adolescents

No matter the circumstance, every child has the right to live free from violence, exploitation and abuse, however, children experience various forms of violence, exploitation and abuse. It happens across the world and in the places children should be most protected such as their homes, schools and online. Children in vulnerable settings including victims of child labour or trafficking, migrants and refugees, and girls and women have greater risks of sexual exploitation and violence soars and need adequate protection. Above all, protecting children means protecting their physical, mental and psychosocial needs to safeguard their futures.

Committee A: Promoting Mental Health and Well-being

Definitions

For this committee, mental health refers to the mental well-being of a person. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health means psychological health conditions enabling people to learn and work well, recognize their potential, handle stresses that arise in life, and contribute to communities. Approximately 50% of mental health conditions emerge before the age of 14 years old, therefore this committee will focus particularly on the mental health of children and adolescents, and their well-being, which is defined as the positive conditions when



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people live in fine health as explained by [the Mental Health and Psychological Technical Note](#) published by UNICEF.

Facts about the problems and effects

Mental illness in children, adolescents, and caregivers, especially mothers, as typified by depression and anxiety, are now an urgent topic. UNICEF states that more than 13% of 10-19 year old children had mental disorders in 2019 via the report, [the State of the World's Children 2021](#). Further, mental health is imperiled by complex problems, mainly divided into the following topics:

Poverty: As [the World Mental Health Report: Transforming Mental Health for All](#) from WHO shows, poverty is associated with insufficient mental health treatment. Children and mothers who suffer from poverty are often unable to undergo sufficient mental treatment nor maintain their basic living standards. They may also lack access to a proper education, which leads to fewer opportunities for employment. Lack of opportunities for hiring can cause mental stress and amplify anxiety. Without proper education, victims may never learn how to care for their own mental health. All of this can sink them deeper into poverty, due to high costs of living, including mental health care.

Bullying: With the development of technology, the risk of not only physical bullying but also cyberbullying and cyber harassment has increased. Cyberbullying refers to bullying using technology, for instance, social media, texts, and mail. Due to cyberbullying, students agonise over long-lasting effects such as depression, embarrassment and lost self-esteem. On September 4th, 2019, UNICEF and the UN reported that one in three children had been a target of cyberbullying and one in five of them has been out of school through [the UNICEF poll: More than a third of young people in 30 countries report being a victim of online bullying](#).



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COVID-19 Pandemic: Since 2020, COVID-19 lockdowns have spread worldwide and created confusion for adolescents' as their lifestyles changed. For example, due to the closure of schools, they have had to take online classes and accept limitations on social interaction. Consequently, these changes have increased social isolation and reduced physical activity. UNICEF indicates 90% of adolescents faced the closure of schools in 2020. According to [Life in Lockdown](#) published by UNICEF in 2021, the

pandemic increased issues amongst children and adolescents which were related to depression, fear and anxiety, stress, and alcohol and substance abuse.

Humanitarian Emergencies such as armed conflicts, displacement, earthquakes, and natural disasters burden people's mental health. The WHO shows that one in five people will experience mental afflictions such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or schizophrenia. Not only the war between Ukraine and Russia but other regional conflicts threaten children's psychological health. Notably, UNICEF reported nearly 1,000 children were killed due to the war in Ukraine as of August 22, 2022. The report, [Stop the War on Children: A Crisis of Recruitment](#) by Save the Children International indicates that approximately 452 million children, which is the highest number in 20 years, were living in a conflict zone.

Discrimination: People who are discriminated against, based on their race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. are also more likely to experience mental stress, develop drug and alcohol addictions, and suffer from PTSD.

Finally, it should be noted that while the worldwide demand for good quality care is high, government investment in mental health globally comprises only 2.1% of health investment in general.

Effects

In addition to those described above, the problems that cause mental health issues for children and mothers can also lead to:

- **Economic loss:** UNICEF has revealed the annual loss of human capital caused by mental diseases of children aged 0-19 is \$387.2 billion worldwide.
- **Stigma:** Directed towards not only those with mental health problems but also caregivers who support them. Due to the negative image of mental illness, people who are mentally distressed may be stereotyped, quarantined, or excluded from their communities.
- **Suicide:** According to WHO, self-harm is the fourth cause of mortality among 15-29 years old in 2021.

Action that has been taken, or is being taken

[Blue Dot](#), an agency supported by UNICEF and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), is addressing the humanitarian emergency in Ukraine by serving as a support hub for those who escape from Ukraine. [Blue Dot Shelters](#) played an active role in the 2015-2016 European refugee crisis to support women and children. They provide safe spaces and psychological support for children. In particular, they keep an eye on children at risk, such as children traveling alone, having disabilities, and experiencing sexual or physical violence so that they will be protected from physical and psychological harm.

The UN's [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support](#) (2007) serves as the guide for responses in the midst of emergencies in order to safeguard mental health and psychological support (MHPSS). It is based on the thought that social support is essential to protect psychological health in the early stage of catastrophes and emergencies and emphasizes cooperation among supporters and sectors. This guideline is designed for humanitarian supporters, namely community-based organizations, government agencies, UN agencies, and NGOs. In disasters and emergencies, human rights violations occur frequently, so with the implementation of the guidelines, it will be easier to prevent discrimination, abuse, and violence.

WHO began the [United for Global Mental Health](#) Program in 2017, which contributes to mitigating stigma under 4 areas: rights, education, mechanisms, and financial aspects. For example, one of its focuses is universal health coverage (UHC) which refers to the fact that every single human should have access to the highest and achievable health regardless of economic difficulties. However, there are gaps in terms of mental health care coverage and the gap even reaches 90% in LMICs.

Important Resolutions/Conventions/Treaties

[The Alma Ata Declaration](#) (1978)

Through [the Alma Ata Primary Healthcare Conference](#), this declaration was settled. It affirmed that humans have the right to participate in the planning and implementation of their health treatment. It also indicates the role of primary health care is crucial for promotive, preventive, healing, and rehabilitative treatments.

[Human Rights Council Resolution 36/13: Mental Health and Human Rights](#) (2017)

This resolution acknowledges the importance of MS liability to protect, promote, and ensure human rights with a focus on mental health, and eradicate all forms of discrimination, stigma, and social preclusion. It also highlights that Member States have to take measures which are community-based and human-centered to enhance empowerment of people with mental disorders.

Important Research Links for Committee (Country databases, Resolutions)

- [Policy Brief: COVID-19 and the Need for Action on Mental Health](#)
- [WHO Mental Health in Schools: A Manual](#)
- [Resolution 6/29 \(A/HRC/6/29\): Right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health \(2007\)](#)
- [Global Early Adolescents Study](#)
- [Women's, children's and adolescents' health country profiles and dashboards](#)
- [A Human Rights-based Global Agenda for Mental Health and Human Rights](#)
- [Strategic Intelligence \(World Economic Forum\): Mental Health](#)

- [OECD Health Care Quality Indicators: Mental Health Care](#)

Further Research that can develop into policies

Consideration of these questions is needed when writing and researching the topics which will be developed into policies:

- Are there any differences between males and females in terms of mental illness?
- What should caregivers such as families, friends, and school teachers do to protect children and adolescents from psychological disorders?
- What are effective ways to prevent stigma?
- How do experts in your country measure mental health?
- Are there any specific indicators for mental health measurement?

Committee B: Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

Definitions

Sexual health

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), sexual health is currently defined as: a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.



Photo Credit:
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/88/An_ICSV_volunteer_delivers_a_sexual_health_lesson.jpg/512px-An_ICSV_volunteer_delivers_a_sexual_health_lesson.jpg

Reproductive health

As stated by the WHO, reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) defines that sexual and reproductive health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to all aspects of sexuality

and reproduction, not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Therefore, a positive approach to sexuality and reproduction should recognize the part played by pleasurable sexual relationships, trust and communication in the promotion of self-esteem and overall well-being. All individuals have a right to make decisions governing their bodies and to access services that support that right. Achievement of sexual and reproductive health relies on the realization of sexual and reproductive rights, which are based on human rights.

Facts about the problems and effects

More than 30 different bacteria, viruses and parasites are known to be transmitted through sexual contact. Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) have a crucial impact on sexual and reproductive health through stigmatization, infertility, cancers and pregnancy complications worldwide. STIs can also be transmitted from mother-to-child during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding, which can result in stillbirth, neonatal death and complications.

HIV is one of STIs considered as an extremely serious public health issue. HIV destroys and impairs the immune system and weakens people's defense against many infections and various types of cancer. WHO reported that there were an estimated 38.4 million people living with HIV at the end of 2021, two thirds of whom (25.6 million) are in the WHO African Region. About 650,000 people died from HIV-related causes and approximately 1.5 million people acquired HIV in 2021. Although there is currently no cure for HIV infection, it has become a manageable chronic health condition due to increasing access to effective HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care.

According to WHO, maternal death is also one of the global issues on reproductive health. In 2017, 94% of all maternal deaths occur in low and lower middle-income countries. About 295,000 women died during and/or immediately following pregnancy and childbirth. The MMR in low income countries was 462 per 100,000 live births versus 11 per 100,000 live births in high income countries in 2017, highlighting the gap between rich and poor. Most of the complications develop during pregnancy and most are preventable or treatable, and skilled care can save the lives of women and newborn babies.

Based on [UNICEF's data](#) on adolescent pregnancy, the risk of maternal mortality is highest for adolescent girls under 15 years old. Adolescent pregnancy is a global phenomenon with clearly known causes and serious health, social and economic consequences. In 2019, adolescents aged 15-19 years in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) had an estimated 21 million pregnancies each year, of which approximately 50% were unintended and which resulted in an estimated 12 million births. 55% of the unintended pregnancies end in abortions, which are often unsafe in LMICs. Adolescent mothers aged 10-19 years have higher risks of several maternal complications than women aged 20-24 years, and babies of adolescent mothers face higher risks of low birth weight, preterm birth and severe neonatal condition. Although the adolescent birth

rate (ABR) has globally decreased from 64.5 births per 1000 women in 2000 to 42.5 births per 1000 women in 2021, the actual number of childbirths to adolescents still remains high. ABRs have declined in all regions, but the rates of decline have been uneven across regions. Adolescent pregnancy tends to be higher among those with less education or of low economic status.

Maternal nutrition counseling helps a woman and her family members make decisions and take action to improve their conditions. Even though this service is a recommended component of health care, many women do not receive quality nutrition counseling. UNICEF has been running [a counseling programme](#) which aims to provide UNICEF country offices and their partners with guidance on how to improve the coverage, quality and equity of maternal nutrition counseling in low and middle income countries.

Child marriage and child sexual abuse are often the unintended cause of an increase in the risk of adolescent pregnancy. Sexual abuse brings not only physical but also psychological and social harm. [UNICEF reports](#) that at least 120 million girls under the age of 20, which is about 1 in 10, have been forced to engage in sexual acts, although the actual number is likely much higher. [UNICEF also reports](#) that many victims of sexual violence, including millions of boys, never tell anyone about the violence.



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Among the 1.9 billion women aged 15-49 years worldwide in 2019, 1.1 billion have a need for family planning. Of these, 270 million have an unmet need for contraception. The number of women who desire to use family planning has increased considerably from 900 million in 2000 to nearly 1.1 billion in 2020. As a consequence, the number of women using a modern contraceptive method increased from 663 million to 851 million and the contraceptive prevalence rate increased from 47.7 to 49.0 percent. Use of contraception advances the human rights of people to determine the number and spacing of their children. Also, it prevents pregnancy-related health risks for women, especially for adolescent girls. The infant mortality rate is 45% higher when births are separated by less than two years, than it is when births are 2-3 years apart. It offers a range of potential non-health benefits including expanded education opportunities and empowerment for women, and sustainable population growth and economic development for countries. The proportion of women

aged 15-49 years who need family planning satisfied by modern contraceptive methods (SDG indicator 3.7.1) has increased gradually from 73.6 percent in 2000 to 76.8 percent in 2020.

Action that has been taken or is being taken

In order to enable adolescents to protect and advocate for their health, well-being and dignity, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is extremely important. CSE provides a necessary toolkit of knowledge, attitudes and skills. The [United Nations Population Fund \(UNFPA\)](#) works with governments to implement CSE, both in schools and outside of schools through community-based training and outreach. The UNFPA also promotes policies for, and investment in, sexuality education programmes that meet internationally agreed upon standards.

To help end the AIDS endemic, in 2020, UNAIDS released 95-95-95 targets, which calls for

- 95% of all people living with HIV to know their HIV status.
- 95% of people with diagnosed HIV infection are receiving treatment.
- 95% of all people on HIV treatment (antiretroviral therapy) have a viral suppression.

[The UNICEF Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment](#) was launched in 2019 to prohibit child sexual exploitation and abuse. In order to prevent and respond to sexual abuse and exploitation, UNICEF has been working on its Child Protection programming such as Child Protection Systems Strengthening (CPSS). Since 2012, UNICEF has been systematically monitoring its contributions to child protection systems strengthening. UNICEF Strategic Plan (2018-2021) aims to intensify the strengthening of national systems to assist the most disadvantaged girls and boys. UNICEF provides a first line of response for children at risk in more than 150 countries, aiming to timely assist every victim of sexual exploitation and abuse.

In 2014, UNICEF launched the [Every Newborn Action Plan \(ENAP\)](#), which provides a road map of strategic actions for ending preventable newborn mortality and stillbirth and contributing to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity. The ENAP presents a clear path to 2020 with specific global and national milestones. The plan was based on evidence published in The Lancet Every Newborn series, and developed within the Every Woman Every Child framework, launched by the former UN Secretary-General in 2010 to advocate for the health of women, children and adolescents.

Important Resolutions/Conventions/Treaties

[Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development \(General Assembly \(GA\) Resolution S-21/2\)](#)

This is the resolution on key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), which mentions development policies and programmes aiming to achieve multiple goals including child/maternal

mortality reduction, the provision of universal access to reproductive health services, including family planning and sexual health, sustainable patterns of consumption and production. This resolution was adopted at the 21st special session of the General Assembly in New York in 1999.

[Countering child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online \(GA Resolution 74/174\)](#)

This is resolution on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online adopted at the 74th session of the GA in 2019.

[Rights of the child: resolution \(GA Resolution 74/133\)](#) This is the resolution on rights of children adopted at the 74th session of the GA in 2020.

[Strengthening national and international efforts, including with the private sector, to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse \(GA Resolution 77/233\)](#) This is the resolution on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online adopted at the 77th session of the GA in 2022.

[Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights in humanitarian settings \(Human Rights Council \(HRC\) Resolution 39/10\)](#) This is the resolution on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity adopted at the 39th session of the Human Rights Council in 2018.

Important Research Links for Committee (Country databases, Resolutions)

- [Global HIV & AIDS statistics - Fact sheet](#)
- [Sexual and reproductive health and rights \(Office of the high Commissioner for Human Rights: OHCHR\)](#)
- [UNICEF datasets](#)
- [UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021](#)
- [UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025](#)
- [Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030](#)
- [World family planning 2022 : meeting the changing needs for family planning: contraceptive use by age and method \(UN DESA/POP/2022/TR/NO.4\)](#)
- [Background document for the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25- Acceleration the promise](#)
- [Infant and young child nutrition: biennial progress report \(WHA61.20\)](#)
- [United Nations Population Fund \(UNFPA\), Comprehensive sexuality education](#)
- [ICPD AND HUMAN RIGHTS: 20 years of advancing reproductive rights through UN treaty bodies and legal reform](#)
- [UN Advocacy Tool](#)

Further Research that can develop into policies

Consideration of these questions is needed when writing and researching the topics which will be developed into policies:

- How can UNICEF work to support the sexual/reproductive health of adolescents?
- What are the examples of violations of SRHR? & How can governments promote SRHR?
- What are best practices in ensuring access to modern contraception methods?
- How can developing Member States reduce MMR further?
- How can UNICEF work to support the incorporation of youth and their digital civic participation into the initiatives at the national level?
- How can the international community better protect young people on the Internet?

Committee C: Improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Definitions

According to UNICEF, [sanitation](#) is not only concerned with toilets, but also with the hygienic environment provided by behaviors, facilities, and services together. This environment is necessary for children to fight diseases and grow up in a healthy way. Furthermore, UNICEF recognizes the value of good hygiene for preventing the spread of infectious diseases and helping children live long and healthy lives. Good hygiene also contributes to children staying in school, which will lead to better learning outcomes. Families with good hygiene also have fewer health issues and spend less on health care.



Photo Credit:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/70/Togo_-_UDDTs_sponsored_by_UNICEF_and_Japanese_Government_-_UDDTs_parain%C3%A9es_par_l%27UNICEF_et_le_Gouvernement_Japonais_%284942042368%29.jpg/512px-Togo_-_UDDTs_sponsored_by_UNICEF_and_Japanese_Government_-_UDDTs_parain%C3%A9es_par_l%27UNICEF_et_le_Gouvernement_Japonais_%284942042368%29.jpg

[Safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene \(WASH\)](#) is important for health, livelihoods, and school attendance, and access to it is a basic human right. Safe and adequate WASH contributes to preventing numerous neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), which are a group of 20 infections that are mostly prevalent in tropical areas, such as trachoma, soil-transmitted and schistosomiasis. WASH is not only a requirement for health, but contributes to livelihoods, better school attendance and personal dignity.

Facts about the problems and effects

Water: Today, 785 million people are not guaranteed basic access to water. Moreover, the current level of global assets is about one-third of what is required to achieve the UN's goals, including achieving access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030. Untreated excreta pollutes groundwater and surface waters used for drinking water, irrigation, bathing, and household

purposes. Drinking unsafe water harms health by leading to illnesses such as diarrhea. According to [UN Women](#), children and women are responsible for carrying water for their families in 80% of households lacking water. As a result of walking long distances more than once a day to fetch water, many of these children are prevented from going to school or earning an income. [Climate change](#) hinders children's rights to access to safe water and sanitation, and it leads to various diseases and undernutrition, which influences the severity of diseases and is responsible for practically half of the death of children under five.

Sanitation: About 829,000 people in low and middle income countries die because of the incompetent WASH every year, and they occupy 60% of total diarrhoeal deaths such as cholera and dysentery. Poor sanitation is considered as the main cause of these deaths, and is a major factor in some diseases such as intestinal worms, schistosomiasis and trachoma. The [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) states that over 1.7 billion people still do not have basic sanitation services like private toilets or latrines, and 494 million people of these still defecate in the open. Open defecation contributes to a vicious cycle of disease and poverty. The number of deaths of children aged under 5 years is the highest in the regions where open defecation is widespread as well as the levels of malnutrition and poverty, and disparity of wealth.

Hygiene: Handwashing facilities with water and soap are not common in many regions of the world. Three billion people do not have them at home and almost half of schools, it means some 818 million school-age children do not have access to hand-washing facilities. Even some health-care facilities, where patients are treated, do not have hand-washing facilities and have poor sanitation conditions. Furthermore, women and girls often face risks if they need to use toilets outside, or in facilities shared with men. A good hygiene knowledge or hygiene facilities especially at schools is critical for girls' education so that a good [menstrual hygiene management](#) (MHM) is implemented.



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https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/16/Yasnyuvata_UNICEF_distribution_of_hygiene_kits_02.06.%284%29_%2820708856910%29.jpg/512px-Yasnyuvata_UNICEF_distribution_of_hygiene_kits_02.06.%284%29_%2820708856910%29.jpg

WASH in emergencies

Refugees tend to live in overpopulated areas where access to WASH is often limited. Population density can reduce the quantity of safe water for individuals and increase the possibility of pathogen and disease transmission. Access to safe drinking water is a fundamental human right. When refugees from different households share sanitation facilities, there are few adequate hygiene practices. This also exposes women and girls to further

endangerment from harassment and sexual and gender-based violence.

Action that has been taken or is being taken

According to the [Theory of Change, UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025](#), UNICEF is a vice-chair of UN-Water and totally supports the [SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework](#) to unite the global community for sustainable WASH for everyone. The Framework emphasizes five points to achieve results quickly in member states: 1) Financing, 2) Data and information, 3) Capacity development, 4) Innovation, and 5) Governance. UNICEF also works with WHO, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to realize better access to WASH facilities in regions where the facilities are lacking.

UNICEF and WHO have implemented a [Joint Monitoring Programme](#) to expand its global database and publish reports on areas that need better WASH facilities. It is currently focused on 3 areas.

1. **Schools and educational institutions** - UNICEF Supply Division obtained about 20,000 handpumps and motorized pumps used to construct several safe water systems for communities, schools, and health facilities in 33 Member States, most of them in Africa.
2. **Health-care facilities** - As of 2019, UNICEF has been working in over 80 Member States with the focus on providing technical assistance to governments for the construction and rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure, and developing national standards, policies and hygiene protocols for WASH in health-care facilities. UNICEF works with governments to realize and monitor the [Eight Practical Steps](#) for health-care facilities under the partnership with WHO.
3. **Households** - Because of the lack of basic handwashing facilities in homes, 1 billion people were estimated to be at immediate risk of COVID-19. [UNICEF supplies](#) soap to children and families to promote and enable hand hygiene around the world.

Important Resolutions/Conventions/Treaties

[General Assembly \(GA\) resolution 64/292](#) calls upon Member States and international organizations to fund and help capacity-building and technology transfer, especially to developing Member States, so as to develop efforts to provide safe, clean, accessible, and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all.

[General Assembly \(GA\) resolution 73/226](#) calls for an international conference to assess progress in the implementation of the first half of the decade. It also requests the Secretary-General and UN-Water to keep taking appropriate actions to support and organize the activities of the Decade at several levels, and to assist Member States lacking capacity in the implementation of the Decade and the 2030 Agenda. Based on this resolution, the [UN 2023 Water Conference](#) will be held in March.

Important Research Links for Committee (Country databases, Resolutions)

- [PROGRESS ON WASH IN HEALTH CARE FACILITIES 2000–2021](#)
- [Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in schools](#)
- [Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000-2020](#)
- [UNICEF strategy for water, sanitation and hygiene 2016-2030](#)
- [State of the World's Drinking Water | UNICEF](#)
- [WASH Nutrition](#)
- [Making water and sanitation affordable for all:](#)
- [Sanitation Statistics - UNICEF DATA](#)
- [Strong systems and sound investments: Evidence on and key insights into accelerating progress on sanitation, drinking-water and hygiene](#)
- [State of the world's drinking water: An urgent call to action to accelerate progress on ensuring safe drinking water for all](#)
- [NUTRITION, FOR EVERY CHILD](#)
- [WASH Climate Resilient Development](#)
- [WASH FIT: A practical guide for improving quality of care through water, sanitation and hygiene in health care facilities. Second edition](#)
- [The Human Right to Water and Sanitation: Milestones](#)
- [Data | JMP](#)

Further Research that can develop into policies

Consideration of these questions is needed when writing and researching the topics which will be developed into policies:

- How does the WASH problem affect vulnerable people such as children, women, refugees, disabled people and many others?
- Why has the number of people without basic WASH services increased recently?
- How can UNICEF and Member States tackle climate change impacts on the delivery and access to WASH?
- Do Member States have adequate access to WASH?
- Which Member States have made progress towards effective WASH programs?
- What can governments do to implement and improve the WASH strategy?

Committee D: Improving Nutrition for Children and Mothers

Definitions

Nutrition describes the substances taken into the body through food and its effect on human health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), better nutrition can lead to better health for infants, children, and mothers, strengthen the immune system, and contribute to safer pregnancies and births. On the other hand, malnutrition - a lack or excess of nutrition, an

essential nutrient imbalance, or a nutrient utilization condition - can profoundly impact a child's health, learning, and economic well-being. Unless these influences are addressed they will continue to affect the next generation and the next, so improving nutritional status is considered essential for the health and well-being of children.

Facts about the problems and effects

Malnutrition, in any form, is a serious challenge to human health and a violation of human rights. Today the world faces a double burden of malnutrition, including malnutrition and overweight. According to data from [the State of the World's Children 2019: Children, Food, and Nutrition](#), approximately 45% of worldwide children between the ages of 6 months and two years do not eat enough fruits and vegetables. The nutrients obtained from these foods are essential for life. The lack of these nutrients results in 149 million children being stunted. Nutritional deficiencies also contribute to poor brain development, impaired learning ability, weakened immune systems, and an increasing number of infectious diseases, often leading to death.

Additionally, the nutritional status of the mother can also have a significant impact on the child's intelligence and learning ability. According to the [United Nations Standing Council on Nutrition \(UNSCN\)](#), iodine deficiency, which severely affects the fetus, currently affects approximately 1.6 billion people worldwide. Thus, it is estimated that there are around 1.6 billion people with iodine deficiency disease, which seriously affects the unborn child. As a result, 17% of all children are born with a low birth weight of less than 2.5 kg. It has been reported that children born with low birth weights have lower cognitive abilities in infancy and lower attention span in school, which will lead to life-long consequences.

Malnutrition is not only a problem in developing Member States, it is also a problem in developed Member States, as well. The world produces more than 2.6 billion tons of grain every year, which is enough food to feed everyone in the whole world. However, 1.3 billion tons, or one-third of the world's food production for human consumption, is discarded each year. This problem exists worldwide. In some developed Member States, food is thrown away at the consumption stage due to "leftovers" and "expiration dates". In developing Member States, even if a large amount of grain can be produced, it is often wasted before it reaches the people who need it due to inadequate storage facilities or inadequate technology. As a result, it is estimated that 768 million people worldwide will be undernourished by 2020, of which 700 million will be those living in Asia and Africa.



Photo Credit:
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/26/UNICEF_Mitarbeiter_untersucht_Menschen_in_Aethiopien.jpg/512px-UNICEF_Mitarbeiter_untersucht_Menschen_in_Aethiopien.jpg

One of the most common nutritional problems in developed Member States is overweight due to increased access to unhealthy foods such as processed foods, fast foods, and sugary carbonated beverages.. For example, it has been reported that more than 42% of adolescents consume carbonated juice once a day, and more than 45% consume fast food at least once a week. As a result, between 2000 and 2017 one in five children were considered overweight or obese and compared to 1975, 10 times as many girls and 12 times as many boys suffer from obesity today. Even in high-income Member States like the United Kingdom, the rate of overweight among the poorest population is more than twice that of the richest population.

Improving nutritional status is critical to eliminate preventable child diseases and deaths. However, addressing nutrition of children and mothers is a complex multifaceted challenge simply because nutrition management calls for not only knowledge and awareness, but also behavioral changes. This is why the Nutrition sector is often comprised of multi-sectoral approach which mobilizes different stakeholders such as health, education, water and sanitation.

Action that has been taken or is being taken

UNICEF works with more than 45 partners such as World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and World Health Organization (WHO), and ten observers to ensure that the response to nutrition emergencies is coordinated, predictable, timely, effective, and large-scale. The support can be divided into five main categories.

1. UNICEF's program, [United Nations Cluster Lead Agency for Nutrition](#), strengthens country coordination during humanitarian crises and helps build effective partnerships on nutrition with national governments and partners.
2. UNICEF provides timely, high-quality technical assistance to governments and partners, helping them find solutions to emerging challenges for which there are no global guidelines.
3. UNICEF helps governments develop impact-responsive nutrition policies and programs and facilitate cooperation among various stakeholders. They also strengthen national systems and supply chains to ensure that children and women have the nutritional support they need to survive and thrive.
4. UNICEF is strengthening global and national nutrition information systems to support the collection and use of necessary data.
5. In humanitarian settings, UNICEF facilitates responses to prevent and treat malnutrition. As a last resort, they also ensure the provision of essential nutritional support when national systems are ineffective or inadequate during humanitarian crises.

[The Scaling Up Nutrition \(SUN\) Movement](#) is another important initiative addressing nutrition action. This initiative was launched by the UN Secretary-General in 2010 and is now led by 65 Member States and four states in India with a mission to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030.

This is supported by Business Network, United Nations Nutrition, and SUN Donor Network, each comprising more than 4,000 civil society organizations, about 1,400 businesses, five UN agencies, and international donor and foundation groups.

In November 2014, the [Second International Conference on Nutrition \(ICN2\)](#) was hosted by FAO and WHO. World leaders committed to eradicating hunger and preventing malnutrition in all its forms. This was enshrined in the [Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the ICN2 Framework for Action \(FfA\)](#). These provide 60 policies and actions that governments, in collaboration with other stakeholders, can incorporate into their nutrition, health, agriculture, development, and investment plans.



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The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established in 2015 and based on the Global Nutrition Goals of the World Health Assembly (WHO), identify nutrition as a "central element and outcome of sustainable development. Twelve of the 17 SDGs include indicators that are important for nutrition. In particular, Goal 2 of the SDGs calls on Member States to "eliminate hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote

sustainable agriculture." In addition to this global goal, the UN General Assembly has declared the Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025). This is a commitment by UN member states to work for a decade to eliminate malnutrition everywhere, leaving no one behind.

Furthermore, the UN General Assembly has declared 2016-2025 to be the [UN Decade of Action on Nutrition](#). This is a clearly defined, time-bound, and coherent framework for all Member States and stakeholders to increase investments in nutrition and implement policies and programs to improve food security and nutrition.

Important Resolutions/Conventions/Treaties

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights- Article 25](#) - This Declaration was adopted by the Third Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in Paris on December 10, 1948, to respect and secure human rights and freedoms, setting forth common standards to be achieved by all peoples and nations.

[Convention on the Rights of the Child- Article 24](#) - This Convention was unanimously adopted by the 44th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 to promote respect for the fundamental human rights of all persons under the age of 18. Article 24 discusses child health and nutrition.

Important Research Links for Committee (Country databases, Resolutions)

- WHO Fact sheets
 - [Healthy diet](#)
 - [Malnutrition](#)
 - [Obesity and overweight](#)
- [Documents on UN Decade of Action on Nutrition](#)
- [UNICEF Nutrition Strategy 2020-2030](#)
- [Children, food and nutrition, UNICEF](#)
- [Nutrition in Middle Childhood and Adolescence](#)
- [Global Nutrition Monitoring Framework](#)
- [Global Action Plan on Child Wasting](#)
- [Nutrition for Children and Mothers, Save the Children](#)
- [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021, FAO](#)
- [Protecting-Maternal-Diets-and-Nutrition-Services-Programming-COVID19](#)
- [United Nations Resolutions on nutrition](#)

Further Research that can develop into policies

Consideration of these questions is needed when writing and researching the topics which will be developed into policies:

- How is UNICEF tackling issues related to nutrition and malnutrition?
- How does UNICEF intend to deliver nutritional diets, essential nutrition service and passive nutrition practice for children?
- What changes related to nutrition and malnutrition have occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What approaches have emerged or need to be introduced to adapt better nutrition and malnutrition initiatives?