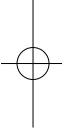
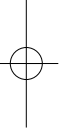
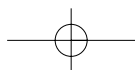


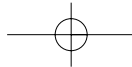
One in Two

Children are the key to Africa's future



Save the Children





Save the Children fights for children in the UK and around the world who suffer from poverty, disease, injustice and violence. We work with them to find lifelong answers to the problems they face.

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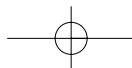
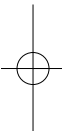
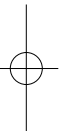
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Abbreviations and acronyms

AIDS	acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome
AU	African Union
DALY	Disability Adjusted Life Years
DDR	demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
G8	group of eight richest countries
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GNP	Gross National Product
HIV	human immuno-deficiency virus
IFI	international financial institution
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	non-governmental organisation
PPP	public private partnership
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SSA	sub-Saharan Africa
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Summary

Breaking Africa's cycle of poverty

The failure to deliver sustainable development in Africa over the last 20 years has been compounded by a failure to put children at the centre of policy. African children experience routine violation of their basic human rights. Tens of millions don't get adequate healthcare or education – many none at all. Millions more are victims of conflict, violence and abuse.

Developed countries have under-delivered on their promises to provide aid to the poorest in sub-Saharan Africa. Healthcare and education are chronically under-funded in many countries, and the poorest families are forced to pay – or go without – even the most basic services. The role of protecting the poorest and most vulnerable children is often left to the poorest government ministries. Children's issues are often seen as an 'add on', and voices calling for action for children's rights as special pleading.

Children – Africa's future

Yet children make up half the population of many African countries, and the proportion is growing. They are Africa's future, and hold the key to changing Africa's fortunes. They are also the most vulnerable.

More than one in six children in sub-Saharan Africa don't reach their fifth birthday, compared to one in 140 in developed countries.¹ Most of these children die from diseases that are easily preventable or treatable, like pneumonia and malaria. On top of this, sub-Saharan Africa is being ravaged by HIV/AIDS. Around 2.2 million children are infected with the virus, and nearly 12.5 million have been orphaned by AIDS.²

Sub-Saharan Africa is the region furthest from achieving universal primary education, with the lowest numbers of children starting school. The number of out-of-school children rose by 17 per cent from 1990–2000, hitting an all-time high of 44 million.³ Nearly half of all children in Africa still fail to complete primary education.⁴

These are shocking statistics in 2005. At current rates, few of the Millennium Development Goals – including those to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty, to reduce child mortality, and for free universal primary education – will be met this century, let alone by 2015. But this year provides a unique opportunity. There is broad agreement about what developed countries need to provide – more and better-targeted aid, fairer trade and debt relief. African governments also need to focus on better governance and providing basic rights for all. But unless these policies focus on children, we will fail to break the cycle of poverty for future generations in Africa.

Table 1: Percentage of population under 18 years of age

Sub-Saharan Africa	51%
Uganda	57%
Mali	56%
Niger	56%
Angola	55%
Burkina Faso	55%
Somalia	54%
Chad	53%
DRC	53%
Rwanda	52%
Tanzania	52%
UK	22%

Source: UNICEF, *State of the World's Children*, 2005

Summary of recommendations

Governments, donors and multilateral agencies must place children – their survival, development and protection – at the centre of policy and practice. Above all, to break Africa's cycle of poverty, there must be an unprecedented level of investment in this generation of children.

Free essential health services and action on HIV/AIDS

All children have the right to healthcare and healthy populations develop better. Investment to develop sustainable basic health systems must be a priority in Africa. Two-thirds of childhood deaths could be prevented with better health services, targeted at and delivered to children.⁵ Governments and the international community must provide sufficient, predictable support so that health workers can be paid. Donors must stop imposing damaging policies that lead to cutbacks in health spending and poor families having to pay for their children's healthcare. Children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS need extra protection.

- The World Bank must stop promoting health systems that prioritise the economically active and start promoting a pro-poor system based on needs and rights.
- User fees must be abolished and universal free healthcare made available to all children, including anti-retroviral therapy.
- African governments and donors must develop and back action for children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS as part of their national plans.⁶

Universal free education

All children have the right to education. Good education benefits society overall, and is both an individual's and a country's best route out of poverty. Every extra year that girls spend in primary school improves the chances that, when they become mothers, their own children will survive and not have

to suffer poverty. Education reduces the risk of HIV/AIDS, especially for girls and women. It must be a priority for every African government, and more aid must be provided so that all children have access to quality, free education. This means no charges or other costs – including for books and equipment – that prevent poor children going to school.

- Universal, free, primary and secondary education must be provided to all African children. This requires sufficient, predictable funding by donors and governments, and an end to International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies that result in cuts to education spending.
- Governments and donors must address the need to improve the quality of education and eliminate discrimination due to ethnicity, gender, disability or HIV/AIDS.

Economic justice for Africa's children

The first Millennium Development Goal is to halve the number of people living in poverty by 2015. Yet the number of people living on less than US\$1 and US\$2 a day in sub-Saharan Africa has risen over the last 20 years.⁷ Economic development is crucial if today's and future generations of children are to have any chance of escaping poverty. But economic growth alone will not necessarily help the poorest children unless it is specifically designed to benefit them and their families. More predictable and harmonised aid, without damaging economic conditions, is needed.

Thirty years ago, rich countries promised they would give 0.7 per cent of their GNI in aid. Delivering on this would provide another US\$130 billion. Donors must stop imposing damaging conditions, such as the inappropriate opening of markets, cutting of subsidies, cutting back on public spending, privatisation and deregulation, and limiting expenditure on essential services that benefit the poorest families. They should back plans developed by countries themselves, especially those aimed at developing health and education systems. Countries in sub-Saharan Africa will never be able to stand on their own feet

economically without fairer trade practices by richer countries.

- African governments must deliver greater economic justice by prioritising the measures that eradicate childhood poverty in their budgets and being more transparent, accountable and participative, especially in the development of their poverty reduction plans.
- Rich countries must back poverty reduction plans with enough resources. All donors should be putting 0.7 per cent of GNI into aid by 2010 and, in addition, making sure all Africa's unpayable debts are cancelled.
- Donors must stop imposing damaging conditions that reduce the income of the poorest families and reduce investment in health, education and social protection. Resources must be predictable and donors must align their support efforts.

Food security for children

Lack of food security is one of the main causes of malnutrition in sub-Saharan Africa, and most childhood deaths are related to malnutrition.⁸ One in ten children under five are acutely malnourished,⁹ and it is usually the poorest families whose food supply is most insecure. Many children have to drop out of school and work, often in dangerous and exploitative situations, to pay for food for themselves and their families. Yet donors and governments are failing to tackle the causes of malnutrition and the fact that many families cannot provide sufficient food for their children. Direct food aid is not enough. International donors must take a much broader approach to protect livelihoods and provide long-term food security, with social safety nets and protection for those who are most vulnerable.

- International action must deliver early warning and effective poverty analysis at the heart of African governments to prevent children going hungry – in particular livelihoods analysis rather than general blueprints that fail to recognise complexities.

- Policies from governments and international institutions to reduce food insecurity must ensure marginalised rural populations are not left behind.
- Food aid must not be tied to food supplies from donor countries.

Stop the war on children

Up to 100,000 children in Africa were directly involved in armed conflict in 2004.¹⁰ Children made up approximately 40 per cent of some armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2003,¹¹ where nearly 4 million people have died as a result of the six-year conflict. Two-thirds of primary school-aged children in the country do not attend school¹² and most child deaths in the DRC, as in other conflict-ridden countries, are due to preventable diseases. Distinctive strategies are needed to stimulate investment in children in so-called failing states or those affected by conflict. Failure to secure progress with children in these countries will mean the cycle of conflict and decline will not be broken. In addition to such strategies, the best hope for resolving Africa's continued struggle with conflicts of regional scale must be through the African Union.

- African states must ratify the Optional Protocol to the UNCRC on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. Governments must also adopt the Cape Town Principles¹³ to tackle issues around children on the demobilisation and reintegration of children associated with armed forces, not just 'child soldiers', and in particular develop measures for girls.
- Those involved in African peacekeeping must be trained in the protection of children in conflict.
- A 'zero tolerance' stance should be adopted towards violence, exploitation and abuse of children, backed by action against individuals and groups suspected of violations and a new international monitoring and reporting system.
- Education must be provided to protect children

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during conflict, and as a central part of post-conflict reconstruction programmes.

Transparency to tackle corruption

Oil, gas and mining, referred to as extractive industries, are a major source of revenue in many African countries. But, instead of benefiting sustainable development and children, Africa's wealth of resources has often increased poverty and fuelled conflict and corruption. Children have paid with their lives as resources have been diverted from essential services, such as health and education, to pay for military and security spending, or through corruption. Mandatory regulations that require companies to disclose their payments to host governments could improve revenue use in Africa. By requiring companies registered on their territory to report their payments in all the countries in which they operate, rich country governments could directly improve the availability of revenue information to citizens in Africa. This would help citizens to hold their governments to account for the revenues that should be used to benefit the the population as a whole, including children.

- Home governments must require multinationals in the extractive sector to publish their payments to host governments. African governments must disclose revenues they receive. Both must develop relevant access to information legislation.
- International financial institutions (IFIs) must make revenue transparency a requirement of all loans, investments, underwriting and technical assistance programmes. The G8 and other home governments must use their influence through IFI boards of directors to establish and implement this.
- A UN General Assembly resolution must declare the international community's support for greater extractive industry transparency.

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I Free essential health services and action on HIV/AIDS

*“It’s simple – if you have money you will be cured.
If you don’t have money you will die.
If my mother is alive, I will be alive.
If my mother dies, what will become of me?”*

Yiwagu, 12-year-old Ethiopian girl

More than one in six children in sub-Saharan Africa die before their fifth birthday, compared to one in 140 in developed countries. In some sub-Saharan countries the average figure is more than one in four. Sixty per cent of childhood deaths in sub-Saharan Africa are associated with malnutrition.¹

What are children dying from?

Nearly 11 million children globally die each year from preventable or treatable diseases. Diarrhoea and pneumonia account for one third of global under-five deaths.² Twenty-five per cent of under-five deaths in sub-Saharan Africa are due to malaria.³ Sub-Saharan Africa is being ravaged by HIV/AIDS. With 2.3 million deaths in 2004 attributable to AIDS, it remains by far the worst-affected region in the world.⁴ Young people are disproportionately infected with the virus: half of all new HIV infections are among 15 to 24-year-olds, while around 2.2 million under-15s are HIV-positive.⁵ In sub-Saharan Africa, 75 per cent of HIV-positive young people aged 15 to 24 years are girls.⁶

Why are children dying?

Today over 270 million children worldwide have no access to healthcare, Four hundred million have no access to safe water and 500 million have no access to sanitation. In sub-Saharan Africa less than 45 per

cent of children are fully immunised by their first birthday⁷ compared with 70 per cent of under-ones who were fully immunised in 1991. Globally, the lives of 2 million children could be saved each year with greater access to health services like vaccinations.

Two-thirds of childhood deaths could be prevented through improved delivery of effective health services.⁸ Harsh and ineffective economic policies leading to increased poverty, chronic under-investment in health

Table 2: Under-fives mortality, 2001, per thousand children

All Africa	155
Sub-Saharan Africa	169
Sierra Leone	316
Niger	265
Angola	260
Liberia	235
Mali	231
Somalia	225
Guinea-Bissau	211
DRC	205
Zambia	202
Chad	200
Industrialised countries	39
UK	27

Source: Compiled from Table 13.6, Survival prospects, World Bank, *African Development Indicators 2004*, and *State of the World's Children*, UNICEF, 2005.

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systems, and poorly implemented health sector reforms, have increased the cost of healthcare and led to a collapse in Africa's health systems.⁹ Conflict and HIV/AIDS, which have had an adverse effect on life expectancy and have reduced the number of people who can support their families, and migration have all had an impact on the declining health of Africa's children. Although it is recognised that health services and systems are essential to improving children's health, global and national resources have still not been effectively allocated to ensure that governments can meet these ambitious targets. Future resources need to support the long-term development of government healthcare systems instead of buying short-term inputs, such as drugs.

Children have the right to the highest possible standard of health, and to have access to health services. These rights are set out in Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In 1978 governments signed the Alma Ata Declaration which set a target for the "attainment by all peoples of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life". The Declaration defined the responsibility of the state (supported by international organisations and the world community) to provide healthcare within a comprehensive national health system, underpinned by the principles of universal access, participation and equity. In 2004, 25 years after the signing of the declaration, which was never achieved or fully resourced, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution agreeing that these principles were still relevant and needed to underpin the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Three MDG goals are health-related: reducing child deaths, improving maternal health, and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Yet, at present rates, these goals will not be achieved in sub-Saharan Africa for another 150 years.

What is needed

Global health policy

One of the main problems affecting children's health has been global health policy. A health investment model introduced in the 1993 World Bank Development Report *Investing in Health*,¹⁰ the DALY (Disability Adjusted Life Years) analysis, emphasises that health services should ensure that the economically productive population is able to keep working. It focuses on the principles of cost effectiveness, demonstrating how health is important for economic growth. There is now growing evidence that this policy has marginalised and failed children, disabled people and the elderly, and that growth on its own will not bring about equitable services for all.¹¹ In contrast, resource-poor Sri Lanka prioritised social justice over economic growth. It has managed to achieve low child and maternal death rates for over two decades, spending less than 2 per cent of GDP using a redistributive tax system.¹² People pay for healthcare through tax instead of paying at the point of access.

Disease-specific initiatives

Initiatives targeted at specific diseases have not helped nations to build sustainable strategies and systems for delivering health services. Successful initiatives like Universal Child Immunisation are classic examples of how systems can work when supported with technical, logistical and financial resources. However, once those resources are removed, systems will collapse. Resources are "often concentrated in one area at the expense of the overall health system" in disease-specific programmes.¹³

Many of these initiatives ignore some of the fundamental costs of supporting health systems. Recurrent costs, such as salaries, generally fall outside of donor policies and this can result in a drain on existing resources in the health system, rather than reinforcing them. Financial and technical support should include paying for recurrent costs, such as staffing. Many health systems now rely on Private

Public Partnerships (PPPs), which are partnerships between private organisations, UN bodies, national governments and civil society in order to achieve a certain goal. There is an urgent need for globally agreed principles for PPPs. World Health Organization (WHO) standards and guidelines must ensure that PPPs respond to a country's national priorities and support existing national systems.

Human resources

One outcome of the under-funding in health systems has been a chronic shortage of health workers – the backbone of health systems. Under-investment in infrastructure, poor working conditions, the impact of HIV/AIDS, which erodes staff numbers, and a growing global market demand for health workers has led to chronic shortages and poor morale in health workers in the poorest countries.

The number of health workers in a population can make an immense difference to whether the MDGs are reached or not. The prospects of vaccinating 80 per cent of a population for measles and having skilled birth attendants available are greatly enhanced if there are more than 2.5 workers per 1,000 people. But sub-Saharan Africa has a tenth of the nurses and doctors that Europe has. It must nearly triple its current numbers of workers through retention, recruitment and training if it is to even come close to meeting the health MDGs. However, according to the Joint Learning Initiative Strategy Report, “global responsibility must be shared because no country is an island in workforce development.”¹⁴ At the World Health Assembly 2004, African ministers asked for global support to tackle the problem of health worker migration. A revised version of the resolution was passed calling for each nation to develop appropriate national solutions to ensure adequate human resources in the health sector. All stakeholders need to support developing countries in tackling this problem.

User fees, privatisation and poverty

The introduction of user fees and increasing privatisation of services has meant that while

medicines and treatment may be available, the poorest people can't afford them. User fees were brought in during the late 1980s, when there was heavy pressure on public expenditure and dwindling aid flows. It suited both donors and governments to shift some responsibility for healthcare to ordinary citizens through ‘cost sharing’. This policy hasn't worked. Our research shows that fees have raised very little extra cash – they contribute less than 5 per cent of the running costs of primary healthcare in sub-Saharan Africa, and the high costs of managing and administering fees absorb 40–60 per cent of revenue.¹⁵

In Tanzania, user fees push people deeper into poverty and pay for only 2 per cent of the recurrent running costs of the healthcare system.¹⁶ But in Madagascar, once user fees were abolished, the numbers of people attending health centres increased and school enrolment rose.¹⁷ These findings support our studies in Ethiopia, Uganda, the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania.¹⁸ A good example of improved access to healthcare is the Tanzanian Essential Health Project which achieved the MDG target levels for pilot districts by its supplementing district spending by less than US\$2 per person every year.¹⁹

HIV/AIDS and anti-retroviral therapy

The WHO aims to provide 3 million people living with HIV/AIDS access to anti-retroviral therapy by the end of 2005. The WHO initiative aims to keep people alive for longer, and the ultimate goal is universal access to treatment. This is good news for Africa, but any scale-up of treatment must also ensure equitable access and support for national healthcare systems. Treatment support will not assist efforts to achieve the MDGs if it detracts from other essential services. The WHO target is unlikely to be met in 2005, and we need to move beyond short-term goals towards implementing programmes that will strengthen national systems and provide a continuum of prevention, treatment and care for people affected by and infected with HIV/AIDS. Steps must be taken to ensure resources safely reach all people equally, including women and children.

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Orphans and vulnerable children

Nearly 12.5 million children in sub-Saharan Africa have been orphaned by AIDS.²⁰ As well as losing the care of their parents, which leaves them more vulnerable to malnutrition and disease, many have to head up households and take on the responsibility of caring for younger siblings. More children are dropping out of school, and many are facing higher risks of physical and sexual abuse, which in turn increases their risk of HIV infection. The crisis faced by orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS should be a priority for African and donor governments. The internationally endorsed Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children living in a World with HIV and AIDS contains the key policy and programme components required to do this.²¹

Recommendations

- Global health policy should shift from present economic analysis, which focuses on providing health services to economically productive populations, to a pro-poor analysis that benefits children.
- Long-term financial and technical support for African nations to build sustainable healthcare strategies and systems that deliver essential health services should be provided.
- User fees should be abolished to ensure free universal access to essential healthcare in order to reduce childhood mortality.
- Free anti-retroviral therapy should be provided for all who need it.
- National plans for orphans and vulnerable children should be developed and funded in line with the Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children living in a World with HIV and AIDS, and African nations and donor governments should make specific time-bound and measurable commitments, including additional earmarked resources, for implementation of the plans.
- National Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes should allocate concurrent funds to education, water and sanitation to promote improved child and maternal health.

2 Universal free education

“Education broadens the scope of your thinking. It enables you to communicate with people when you go to other places.”

Young person, Ethiopia

The number of out-of-school children in sub-Saharan Africa rose by 17 per cent between 1990 and 2000, hitting a high of 44 million. Globally, it remains the region furthest from achieving universal primary education, with the lowest numbers of children starting school.²² Primary education is still not free in 91 countries worldwide; 38 of them – the largest proportion – are in Africa.²³ Nearly half of all children in Africa fail to complete primary education, the figure having fallen only from 50 per cent to 49 per cent between 1990 and 2000.²⁴ Sub-Saharan Africa lags far behind other continents in enrolment at all levels, and in most countries girls are more likely to drop out early.

The most vulnerable children in Africa fall through the net educationally, as they do in every other way. The most disadvantaged children and young people are those excluded by poverty, conflict or discrimination due to ethnicity, gender, disability or HIV/AIDS. Exclusion from education creates further inequality and marginalisation for these already vulnerable groups of children. The average primary student-teacher ratio in 2003 was 44.7 in Africa and 27.6 in the rest of the developing world.²⁵ The poor quality of education available in many countries deters families and their children from enrolling in schools, and also leads to many children repeating grades or dropping out.

Education is the right of every child and young person, as articulated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All and the 2000 Millennium Development Goal (MDG).

Article 28 of the UNCRC calls on states to provide free and compulsory primary education and to encourage accessible secondary education. At the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, every country pledged to achieve education for all the world’s children by 2015. Poor countries agreed to develop credible education sector plans and rich countries agreed to assist with resources.

What is needed

Primary and secondary education

It is at primary school that most children learn literacy and numeracy, develop critical thinking skills, and begin to acquire an understanding of themselves and their role in the world around them. It is a key building block for life. If the right to education is to

Table 3: Percentage of schoolchildren completing primary education to Grade 5 1998–99*

Angola	4% (same for girls)
Equatorial Guinea	16% (19% for girls)
Liberia	33% (17% for girls)
Guinea Bissau	38% (34% for girls)
Rwanda	39% (40% for girls)
Malawi	49% (43% for girls)
Chad	54% (48% for girls)
Burundi	58% (same for girls)
Mauritania	61% (55% for girls)
Ethiopia	64% (same for girls)

*The most recent year for which figures are available.

Source: Compiled from Table 13.6, Pupil progression, World Bank, *African Development Indicators 2004*.

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have any meaning, primary education must be made freely available. Those who can't pay should not be denied the chance to learn. Offering free education means covering all costs – including fees, books and equipment, extracurricular expenses and other charges.

Providing primary education to children – girls in particular – creates benefits not only for themselves, but for the overall society they are living in. They are better equipped to control their own fertility, protect themselves against early pregnancy, sexually-transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, and raise healthy families themselves when they feel the time is right. Education even prolongs life expectancy. It reduces the risk of HIV/AIDS, especially for girls and women. Young people with little or no education may be 2.2 times more likely to contract HIV as those who have completed primary school. Around 700,000 cases of HIV/AIDS in young adults could be prevented every year if all children were able to finish their primary school studies.²⁶ Every extra year that girls spend in primary school lowers by 8 per cent the risk, when they become mothers, of their child dying prematurely. Clearly, the individual and social benefits of education are interconnected.

While most support the global need to ensure free good quality primary education, this has unfortunately led to under-investment in secondary schooling, and complete neglect of tertiary education. Children deepen their understanding of the arts, humanities and sciences, learn life skills, develop vocational skills, decide on a career, and prepare to take part in their society as adults at this stage in their education.

Secondary schooling should be free and available to all. Yet, the increasingly applied orthodox economic view of education, based on the idea of human capital, sees higher levels of education and the education of boys primarily generating private benefits for the individuals concerned – mostly in the form of higher future income. This 'rate of return' indicates the potential for cost recovery; that is, how much people should be willing to pay for their education.²⁷ Besides violating the right to education for all as a worthwhile end in itself, this approach has made post-primary education prohibitively expensive for all but a wealthy

minority. The poorest people just can't afford a secondary education, and this blights their future life and job opportunities.

Investment in education

The World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 pledged that no country seriously committed to education would be thwarted by lack of resources. However, many governments just don't have sufficient money to recruit and pay enough teachers, let alone invest in further quality initiatives.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionalities have slowed efforts to achieve education for all in many countries. Donor priorities in financing Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes may differ from those of national governments and such conditionalities can limit finances for education.

Aid for education is miniscule. It is estimated at just over US\$1 billion per year for primary education, out of a total annual aid figure of US\$50 billion. Aid for post-primary education is likely to disappear altogether. Commitment to the Fast Track Initiative, a joint country partnership created to help low-income countries fund the education MDGs has been weak. Aid or debt relief should be available to attract, motivate and retain skilled staff through, for example, supporting recurrent budgets, removing wage caps and funding remote posting allowances.

In most countries it is local rather than central government that bears the main financial responsibility for financing primary education. Decentralisation has often meant that ministries can "dump unwanted responsibilities on decentralised organisations without providing commensurate resources".²⁸ Governments say they can't afford to finance education for all, and blame structural adjustment programmes, fiscal austerity and economic recession.²⁹ Yet, making families and communities responsible for financing education widens the gap between rich and poor.

Inclusive education

It is essential that good quality education services reach all children, especially vulnerable children, to

prevent them from falling into poverty (or into even deeper poverty), and out of mainstream society. However, reaching the most marginalised children is more expensive than reaching the majority, and requires extra investment. Education services should be flexible and responsive to particular needs. Successful approaches include providing local services, more relevant curricula, flexible hours that fit in with working children's schedules, a shortened school year, accelerated learning schemes, mobile schools, supportive and better-supported teachers, and ensuring that children can get to school safely and remain safe while there.

Save the Children promotes education that includes all children, and reaches those currently excluded. Inclusive education is a system that welcomes difference and diversity as a contribution to the school or centre of learning. It provides opportunities for participation, learning and play for children who are presently excluded from school, and improvements for the children already in the school.

Quality education

There is little point in delivering educational services without paying attention to whether or not learning is taking place. Article 29 of the UNCRC commits governments to ensuring that education is "directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential". This obliges states to define educational goals and standards and assess the conditions in which children are being educated against them.

Save the Children defines quality education as, among other things, participatory, relevant, appropriate to the child's social, physical, intellectual and emotional capacities, and inclusive of all children without discrimination. Improving the quality of education in sub-Saharan Africa might include teacher training in effective child-centred learning, developing local teaching materials, promoting teaching in mother tongues, training and recruiting women teachers, making schools more child-friendly, and encouraging more children and parents to participate in the organisation of schools.

Increased participation

Education will not improve unless parents and communities get involved in their children's education, yet in many countries they are excluded from educational decision-making processes. Children are citizens with the right to express an opinion and have that opinion taken seriously (Article 12 of the UNCRC). Children and parents should be encouraged to express their opinions and participate, for example, in children's clubs, parent-teacher associations and community-based management systems for schools and educational institutions. Training in budget monitoring is a particularly powerful way of empowering communities and promoting transparency and accountability.

Recommendations

- Free primary and secondary education should be provided to all children. While the responsibility for financing education is on national governments, if there are insufficient resources available, then funds should be secured from donors in the form of grants or loans. The Fast Track Initiative is the main way to achieve funding for universal primary education.
- Education should be of a high quality and inclusive of all children, including those excluded by poverty, conflict, or discrimination due to ethnicity, gender, disability or HIV/AIDS.
- Existing commitments and agreements by governments and donors to invest in education should be reinforced.
- Greater participation by children, parents and communities in educational management systems and decision-making should be encouraged.
- Aid or debt relief should be used to attract, motivate and retain skilled staff such as teachers.
- IMF-imposed economic conditions on national governments which can have a negative impact on the financing and quality of education should be removed.

3 Economic justice for Africa's children

“Let the extremely poor be the focus of the state's development agenda.”

Young person, 15, Ethiopia

Sub-Saharan Africa has exceptionally high and increasing levels of poverty. The number of people living on less than US\$1 and US\$2 a day has risen substantially since 1981 (from 41.6 per cent to 46.5 per cent and from 73.3 per cent to 76.3 per cent respectively).³⁰ Africa was also the only major developing region with negative growth in income per person during 1980 to 2000.³¹ Inequality has been increasing in most countries in the region and has been shown to be a factor in putting a brake on the benefits accruing from economic growth.

African families have little access to basic services. African governments spent on average US\$6.2 dollars per person on health services in 2003, whereas the World Bank recommends an absolute minimum expenditure per person of US\$15. The rest of the

developing world spent an average of US\$62.5 per person.³²

The first of the UN Millennium Development Goals is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Reducing the number of people living on less than US\$1 a day to half the 1990 levels by 2015 will not be achieved in Africa if current rates of poverty reduction are maintained. There is a clear need for a boost in the level of quality and quantity of aid to Africa so that countries are able to implement the economic policies mentioned above.

Children are clearly a country's future and represent its potential for growth and development. We must invest in Africa's children today to break the cycle of poverty.

Table 4: Public expenditure on health, as percentage of GDP (1995–2000)

All Africa	2.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	2.5
Sudan	1.0
Cote d'Ivoire	2.7
DRC	2.7
Cameroon	2.7
Togo, Uganda	1.5
Burundi	1.6

Source: Compiled from Table 13.12, Health expenditure, World Bank, *African Development Indicators 2004*.

Table 5: Public expenditure on education, as percentage of total public expenditure

Equatorial Guinea	0.6
Sierra Leone	1.0
Swaziland	1.5
Central African Republic	1.9
Guinea	1.9
Chad	2.0
Zambia	2.3
Mozambique	2.4
Angola, Niger, The Gambia	2.7

No overall Africa figures given in source.

Source: Compiled from Table 13.21, Public expenditure on education, World Bank, *African Development Indicators 2004*.

What is needed

Economic policy is core to poverty reduction since it creates the environment in which a household will develop or deteriorate. Specifically, the development and implementation of economic policies can help create a sustainable economic future and combat child poverty by:

- establishing economic policies that protect and enhance the opportunities of poor people and not just the well off
- ensuring access to goods and services for all households
- implementing social protection mechanisms to protect the poorest families.

Economic growth policies

Economic growth alone will not necessarily reduce poverty.³³ Policies that aim purely to increase growth may not benefit the poorest people at all and may even increase inequality. A rise in average income does not necessarily mean that everyone benefits. Whether economic growth benefits the population as a whole depends on how it is distributed and also on a country's initial level of inequality. Inequality is also a significant factor in reducing the potential benefits of economic growth. Therefore, to reduce poverty, economic policies should be designed to help increase the incomes of poor families, and not just the well off. This is commonly referred to as pro-poor economic policy.

Pro-poor economic policies vary according to the country. Examples include the promotion of labour-intensive sectors, agricultural development or redistributive policies such as land reform. Policies that reduce a household's poverty are the first and essential step in protecting the welfare of a child. Children who live in poor households who do not feel the benefit of economic growth suffer from insufficient food, lack of money to pay for schooling and health visits, and a lack of future employment prospects. It has been shown that children living in households above the poverty line are more likely to be healthier and better educated than those below it.

Access to goods and services

Households need to have access to a wide range of goods and services. If the children in a household are able to grow up with access to the goods and services that they need, such as schools, clinics, and market produce, then they have a far better chance of becoming productive citizens than those who are economically excluded.

Social protection

The poorest households will frequently be excluded even from pro-poor policies and policies to ensure access to goods and services. For example, these households may be too poor to send a child to school, even if schooling has been provided for free, because a child is needed to work full time to earn income for the household or to care for sick relatives. In such cases, families need direct assistance and protection from falling into irrecoverable poverty, or to escape from it. Such programmes include cash or in-kind transfers to households in poor areas or to means-tested households, through pension schemes, child benefits, or transfers conditional on school or health clinic attendance. Such schemes are necessary to reduce extreme poverty and inequality by increasing school or clinic attendance and nutritional benefits.

Resource raising and allocation

Many governments in Africa rely substantially on foreign aid;³⁴ in some cases up to 90 per cent of their development budgets are supplied by donors. Yet poverty reduction strategies are desperately underfunded. How much revenue is raised and how it is disbursed is central to the ability of governments to implement policy effectively. With the introduction of poverty reduction strategies, African governments have made substantial efforts to define and quantify their development and accompanying expenditure needs. These needs must now be fulfilled.

Beyond African governments' current limited capacity for domestic revenue raising, there are three main

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international issues that determine the quantity and quality of revenue available: trade, aid, and debt.

Most African governments can raise just half the proportion of revenue from domestic taxation as Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, due to the limited number of citizens and companies that are in a position to pay taxes.³⁵ As a country develops, its proportion of tax to GDP ratio increases, but in the meantime an injection of financing is required to boost investment in Africa, break the poverty cycle, and deliver a better future for its children. And this can only be done through better approaches to trade, aid, and debt that are more equitable, of better quality, and that take developing countries' priorities and concerns into account.

Trade

International trade policy represents one of the biggest inequities of global policy. OECD countries spend US\$300bn every year on agricultural subsidies to prop up their own farmers, while contributing only US\$68.5bn to international aid. This support undermines the comparative advantage of developing country farmers in products such as cotton and dairy. Increasing levels of tariffs by OECD members on manufactured products also reduces the competitiveness of developing countries, and reduces their potential for growth.

Fairer trade in these sectors is vital, with substantial gains for both developed and developing countries. It has been estimated that a liberalisation of global trade policies to allow developing countries full market access to their export markets, particularly in agriculture, clothing, and other labour-intensive goods and service industries, would generate the most resources for Africa. The impact would be far greater than either a radical increase in aid, or debt cancellation. For example, an estimated 1 per cent increase in Africa's share of exports could increase revenue to the continent by US\$70 billion, approximately five times the amount Africa receives in aid annually.³⁶

As well as these gains to developing countries, economists widely agree that trade liberalisation would afford net gains to developed countries too, as production and prices would become cheaper in the absence of subsidies and tariffs. However, within global net gains, there are always winners and losers, and some developing countries could stand to lose from broad trade liberalisation. Those countries that currently have access to preferential trade agreements – such as the USA's African Growth and Opportunity Act – could find the benefits from such agreements threatened by a reduction in global tariffs.

In addition to better trade policy, an effective, legally-binding international framework on corporate accountability and liability is needed, which upholds human rights. This must make transnational companies legally accountable in their home countries for activities abroad, and not limit the ability of national governments to regulate foreign investment to suit the interests of their population.

Aid

Developed countries have consistently under-delivered on their promises to assist countries through bilateral and multilateral aid. Nearly all the countries that agreed to allocate 0.7 per cent of their GNP of international aid more than 30 years ago have yet to do so; the UK allocates about half that proportion, and the USA is one of the least generous, allocating around 0.15 per cent. Donors must recognise that a greater aid commitment today will address future problems and reduce poverty and expenditure needs in the long run. The majority of countries are in a position to receive substantially increased levels of aid as long as it is targeted to priority programmes, addresses governance issues and increases the capacity of countries to use the aid money effectively.

Not only must aid quantities be increased, its quality and reliability must also be improved. Development assistance should be channelled into budget support that is predictable, harmonised, and responsive to countries' own needs and priorities. It should not be driven by donor conditionalities, which can lead to

the enforcement of inappropriate reforms, such as the privatisation of state-owned services without ensuring that poor people can continue to use them, for example through subsidies.

Debt Relief

Closely linked to the aid debate is that of debt. Debt relief is an additional way of providing increased resources to Africa by relieving them of the burden of debt servicing – resources that can then be diverted into poverty reduction programmes. The debate is complex and should be assessed on a country-by-country basis. How debt relief will be paid for, and which countries should be prioritised, should be discussed. African governments should be able to engage in these debates effectively.

Recommendations

Governments of developed countries must help relieve and remove the economic constraints that prevent African governments from fulfilling their obligations to their citizens. They must:

- support country-led processes for setting priorities that will reduce child poverty. This must involve an end to damaging economic conditions attached to aid and debt reduction, that lessen the income of the poorest families (eg, opening up their markets and reducing subsidies) and limit investment in health, education and social protection
- promote pro-poor growth economic policies, access to goods and services, and social protection programmes
- fulfil the 1970 commitment to provide 0.7 per cent of their gross national income, which would provide another US\$130 billion per year in aid

- allocate aid to countries where the need is greatest and avoid unsustainable and ineffective aid spending (eg, by supporting health systems rather than disease-specific vertical programmes)
- negotiate reductions of debt by the poorest countries and establish fair and transparent processes to avoid or resolve future debt and financial crises effectively without compromising basic needs
- end agricultural export subsidies and improve market access, without forcing African countries to liberalise their markets
- establish an effective, legally-binding international framework for transnational companies to become more accountable for activities both in their home countries or abroad.

African governments must ensure that:

- economic policy-making processes are country-owned, transparent, representative, accountable and as participatory as possible
- budgetary allocations reflect the poverty reduction priorities of the country, which should be designed to generate sustainable livelihoods for the whole population, as well as ensuring social protection for the poorest.

The role of the major developed countries in international decision-making processes through their majority shareholding in the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, can lead to them imposing conditions on developing countries. This applies equally to conditions attached to bilateral loans. Their dominance during World Trade Organization negotiations, and in managing the international financial institutions, means that the major developed countries bear the primary responsibility for ensuring that the above changes occur.

4 Food security for children

“If I had one extra US dollar a day, I’d buy two hens and start a poultry business. I’d like to be independent to continue my education.”

Young person, 14, Ethiopia

Food insecurity is one of the main causes of malnutrition in sub-Saharan Africa, and is often associated with poverty and the inability of households to afford other basic needs, including healthcare and education. Nearly two-thirds of childhood deaths in sub-Saharan Africa are associated with malnutrition.³⁷ One in ten children under five in sub-Saharan Africa, or 13.3 million, are acutely malnourished; 48.5 million, or 34.5 per cent, are chronically malnourished, hindering their potential for development in later years.³⁸

Save the Children has played a leading role in the analysis of food security and livelihoods in Africa for 15 years, in partnership with other organisations.³⁹ On the basis of this experience, we emphasise the need for greater investment in food security information systems – systems that explain the ways that people get food and an income, and that define geographical

areas or population groups who are unable to meet their minimum needs. This is a first step in assisting national governments and donors to identify ways of enhancing food security and enabling countries to fulfil their natural and human resource potential. Children’s rights need to be explicitly considered in programmes and policies to improve food security, and to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable sections of society are not left behind.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries also have a key role to play in enabling Africa to fulfil its potential, for example, by introducing a fairer system of trade and support to agriculture. Where possible, OECD members should buy food aid locally or regionally and not import it from donors’ own supplies, which is often referred to as tied aid. Enhancing food security and livelihoods should be viewed as part of the wider process of human development, and is linked not only to agriculture and natural resources, but also to issues of education, health, HIV/AIDS and security. It is usually the poorest families that are the most food insecure.

Article 24 of the UNCRC deals with the right to health and health services, and obliges states to provide enough nutritious food and combat malnutrition. Other relevant articles include Article 6, the right to survival and development, and Article 27, the right to an adequate standard of living. The first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, and the seventh goal aims to ensure environmental sustainability.

Table 6: Child malnutrition – percentage of under-fives suffering moderate to severe underweight

Ethiopia	47
Burundi	45
Eritrea	44
Angola	41
Madagascar, Niger	40
Sudan	35
Burkina Faso, DRC	34
Guinea	33

Source: Compiled from Table 13.9, Child malnutrition, World Bank, *African Development Indicators 2004*.

What is needed

Information and analysis

The first step in developing appropriate policies and programmes to enhance food security and livelihoods is to put in place strong and institutionalised food security information systems. These are most obviously required for early warning purposes in crisis situations, but they can also play an important role in informing economic policy and poverty reduction strategies. To be sustainable and credible they must be housed within influential ministries or other national government departments, with strong initial investment in capacity building.

Understanding the diverse ways in which households gain access to food and income in 'normal' times, and how they spend that income, enables us to model the likely impact of various external hazards such as drought, disruption of markets or HIV/AIDS on household food security. It also enables us to examine the likely impact of a variety of policy or programme measures aimed either at mitigating the impact of shocks or at enabling communities to take full advantage of the economic opportunities available to them. To this end, we promote the use of livelihoods-based vulnerability assessment methods. Our own preferred methodology, the Household Economy Approach, is a way of understanding the broad picture of how people get their food and income.

Through our analysis, we were able to highlight an imminent regional food crisis in southern Africa in 2001, and mobilise support for a rapid response which helped ease the impact of the crisis. This work was recently endorsed by the Southern African Development Community heads of state in their May 2004 Dar Es Salaam Communiqué on Agriculture and Food Security, and potentially provides a model for replication elsewhere on the continent. This type of analysis has also been used outside emergency contexts and in other parts of Africa. For example, it was used in Tanzania to help develop their Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

Agriculture, natural resources and rural development

While we do not believe in a blueprint approach to improving food security, we suggest there are some broad principles that should be adhered to.

Linking interventions to analysis

Recent research by Save the Children showed how incorrect assumptions about the needs of families in the Great Lakes region led to inappropriate responses.⁴⁰ Programmes providing food aid, seeds and tools are often implemented mechanically, with little thought to their relevance or whether they are the most efficient way of enhancing food security. Ensuring food security does not always mean giving food aid to people, and in the long term it does not always mean giving them the means to produce their own food. Rural livelihoods are diverse and complex, and so therefore are solutions to resolve livelihoods problems.

We believe a wider range of interventions must be considered. For example, our work in Ethiopia on cash relief has shown that providing cash rather than food enables households to meet a wider range of basic needs in a more cost-effective manner. Projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have shown that food security can be greatly enhanced by rehabilitating farm-to-market access roads, thereby providing farmers with the opportunities to get better prices for their produce, and purchase other foodstuffs and goods more cheaply.

Children's rights and food security

A household is not food secure if, in order to access food, children have to work or drop out of school. In both refugee and drought situations, teenage girls often become involved in transactional sex in return for food or school fees. In the highlands of Ethiopia, children as young as seven leave home to work for better-off families for months at a time, so that their families can pay for food and meet other basic needs.

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Pro-poor interventions

Interventions that may have the greatest impact on national food production and economic growth are not necessarily those that will have the greatest impact on improving household food security and attaining the MDG to eradicate hunger. The populations most vulnerable to food insecurity are often those with the lowest productive capacity, such as land-poor or labour-poor households, or those in chronically poor remote rural areas. These populations typically rely on a more diverse range of activities, such as on- and off-farm labouring, petty trade, collection and sale of grass, firewood, wild foods and crafts. Standard agricultural development interventions, such as providing improved seed varieties or improved soil and water management techniques, are likely to be of limited benefit to them. These groups require a more diverse range of interventions including, for example, improving their rights of access to land, natural resources and financial credit, improving market access or providing skills training.

Policy coherence

There is little value in donors providing aid and encouraging policy reform in developing countries if donors' own policies undermine or restrain livelihoods. In terms of food security and natural resources, this need for policy coherence is most obvious in relation to agricultural support and trade.

The issues in relation to donors' domestic agricultural subsidies and tariffs are well documented. In 2003, OECD members provided US\$68.5 billion in aid to developing countries, while over US\$300 billion is spent every year on support to domestic agriculture. This support undermines the comparative advantage and potential for growth of products produced by farmers in developing countries, such as cotton and dairy. Fairer trade in this sector is vital.

It is also important that food aid is not used to circumvent trade regulations or undermine local producers. In 2003, 70 per cent of all food aid supplied to sub-Saharan Africa was tied to donors' own supplies, while 15 per cent was supplied with

purchases made in third countries. Only 15 per cent was bought locally. Local and regional suppliers may not be able to meet all demands, but higher levels of procurement within Africa could boost producers' and transporters' incomes and develop the agricultural sector within those countries. In 2001, the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD agreed to untie aid to the least developed countries. This agreement, however, specifically excluded food aid and technical assistance, which still remains tied or attached to certain conditions by some donors.⁴¹

Food security and development

While food security and livelihoods are important issues in their own right, they should not only be associated with agriculture and natural resources; livelihoods issues should be understood within the broader context of human development. For many people, the route to sustainable livelihoods requires a broader approach that recognises the close relationship between livelihoods and other issues. Some examples of these inter-relationships include:

Education

Food insecurity can lead to children dropping out of school in order to work or to save on household expenditure. There is also a clear relationship between increased levels of education (particularly at primary level) of adults and the food security of their children. Improving access to quality education for children has significant long-term returns for food security.

Health

Food insecure and malnourished people are more susceptible to illness. They are also least capable of paying for healthcare. Adults in poor health are less productive and earn less income for the household, reducing food security.

HIV/AIDS

AIDS-affected households often become labour-poor and have less ability to produce food and earn income.

Widows and orphaned children can face particular difficulties in relation to inheritance and economic opportunities. Cash transfers can enable these households to employ labour to increase their productivity, while also boosting local employment. Conversely, food insecurity and poverty increase the likelihood of engaging in high-risk behaviour, including transactional sex. Also migrant labourers are more likely to seek other sexual partners while spending long periods away from their families.

Conflict and security

Many conflicts in Africa arise over access to natural resources, such as agricultural or grazing land, or water. A lack of economic opportunities can make involvement in armed forces financially attractive, particularly to young men and boys. At the same time, conflict often greatly undermines food security through the displacement of populations and disruption of agricultural production, market access and trade.

Recommendations

- Major donors should be urged to improve early warning and poverty analysis by providing sustained funding to establish and institutionalise livelihoods-based food security information systems across Africa, which would be housed in key relevant national government ministries or bodies.
- Policies and programmes should be promoted to enhance livelihoods that are based on a sound analysis of existing livelihood patterns, problems and potentials, and reflect their diversity and complexity. Avoid 'blueprint' approaches.
- A definition of food security should be adopted that recognises that children's rights should not be compromised for adequate food.
- As part of efforts to reduce hunger and household food insecurity, in addition to promoting agricultural production and economic growth, pro-poor interventions should be promoted that ensure that marginalised rural populations are not left behind.
- Moves currently underway under the auspices of the World Trade Organization to reduce OECD members' domestic agricultural subsidies and other barriers to trade that hinder agricultural development in Africa should be promoted. In particular, food aid should not be exempt from current recommendations to untie or remove conditions on aid to least developed countries.
- Policy and programme packages should collectively address the goals of enhancing food security and livelihoods, increasing access to quality basic services and protection from conflict, as these are mutually reinforcing objectives.

5 Stop the war on children

“When I was 13 and a half years old, a group of militia came into my school and forced 300 children to join the ... army. I was in the army for two-and-a-half years. Life in the army was very hard with lots of suffering. There was never enough to eat and I was beaten a lot. About half of the army were children”.

Nguna Barakea, 16-year old boy, Democratic Republic of Congo

It is estimated that up to 300,000 children were actively involved in armed conflict worldwide in 1998, and it is unlikely that this number has reduced since then.⁴²

Up to 100,000 African children were directly involved in armed conflict in 2004.⁴³ During the course of the civil war in Sierra Leone, thousands of children were killed and between 15,000 and 20,000 children fought as soldiers, many after being abducted.⁴⁴ All the parties involved in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have recruited, abducted and used child soldiers. Children made up approximately 40 per cent of the members of some armed groups in the eastern DRC in 2003, with at least 30,000 requiring demobilisation.⁴⁵

The six-year conflict in the DRC is the deadliest war in the world since the Second World War, and the worst war ever recorded in Africa. From 1998 to 2004, approximately 3.8 million people died as a result of the crisis. Eighteen months after the signing of a formal peace agreement, people in the DRC continue to die at a rate that is one-third higher than the average rate for sub-Saharan Africa. The war has led to the use of extreme violence, widespread rape, mass population displacements, and a collapse of public health services. However, only a small proportion of deaths (2 per cent) are directly due to war-related violence. Most deaths are due to easily preventable and treatable diseases. Deaths from non-violent causes,

such as infectious diseases, are highest in conflict-prone regions where security problems affect access to healthcare and humanitarian assistance.⁴⁶

More than 27 million children and young people affected by armed conflict worldwide, including refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs), do not have access to education. The majority of these children have been internally displaced within their own country. Conflict-ridden DRC has very few children attending school. Estimates suggest that 33 per cent of primary school-aged children (aged six to 11) were enrolled in school in 2000. Only 12 per cent of secondary school-aged children were enrolled in secondary school.⁴⁷ About 70 per cent of children of primary school age do not attend school.⁴⁸

Approximately 1.8 million people were displaced at some time in Sierra Leone.⁴⁹ The displacement and movement of internally displaced people and refugees leaves many women and girls vulnerable to rape and sexual exploitation. Approximately 50,000 to 64,000 internally displaced Sierra Leonean women, out of a total population of 4.8 million, experienced rape or other sexual abuse during the civil war.⁵⁰ Save the Children found that girls in Sierra Leone were often infected with HIV after being raped by rebels terrorising civilians.⁵¹ Rape is also used systematically in the DRC, where 60 per cent of the armed forces are estimated to be HIV-positive.⁵²

Article 38 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) obliges governments to take steps to prevent children under 15 taking a direct part in warfare, respect humanitarian law as it applies to children, and ensure the protection and care of children affected by armed conflict. Article 1 of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (2000) obliges governments to take steps to prevent children under 18 from taking a direct part in hostilities; only 11 out of 46 African countries have ratified it.

Save the Children believes that it is important to recognise the inter-dependency of the issues of conflict, child protection and how people support their families. In order to understand the impact of conflict in sub-Saharan Africa on the individual child, it is necessary to consider and address a range of child protection and livelihood issues.

What is needed

Tackling the causes

Understanding the economic, political and social causes of conflict involves examining the ways that families survive. Our Household Economy Approach (see page 17 for more detail) allows us to understand the diverse ways in which households ‘normally’ gain access to income, food, medical care, etc, and how they spend their income. This then enables us to predict the likely impact of various events, such as conflict, and examine different responses aimed at preventing the impact of events such as civil war. This approach also enables communities to access available economic opportunities by identifying markets that are less prone to conflict, or products to sell that are less susceptible to price variations.

Before and during a conflict, families often cannot provide children with essentials such as food, healthcare or education. These circumstances too often dictate that children and their families need to seek alternative ways to survive. This may involve recruitment into armed forces, forced migration (often

alone), institutionalisation, commercial sex work and separation from their families. A livelihoods-based approach could lower child protection risks and reduce the number of children drawn into conflict.

Strengthening responses

Livelihoods

There is often no coherent, livelihoods-based programme response to conflict. For example, the livestock sector is often ignored during conflict, even though it suffers immense damage and is, in many places, the most important ‘engine’ in the economy. A detailed understanding of livelihoods before conflict breaks out would enable an appropriate response from donors after conflict has commenced.

Protecting children associated with armed forces

Children are used in a variety of roles by armed forces, not only as combatants but also as cooks, porters, spies, for laying mines, or sex – especially girls. Using the term ‘child soldiers’ leads to the exclusion of this broader group of children from the benefits available from demobilisation programmes. All children associated with armed forces need to be supported to leave at all times, even during conflict. Their release from the armed forces should not be contingent on a peace process or formal demobilisation process.

Sexual and gender-based violence

Lack of security during conflict is a serious protection and livelihoods problem for children and families. In particular, rape is often used as a weapon of war against women and children of all ages. Peacekeepers, and humanitarian and non-state actors must be trained in the protection of children and women; the child protection process should be monitored and reporting mechanisms introduced. Criminals should be brought to justice and impunity should be countered through national or international justice mechanisms.

Often the official response during times of insecurity is inadequate. Research undertaken in Liberia in March 2002 confirmed this.⁵³ Children revealed that when

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food rations and other supplies ran out, they were under greater pressure to seek alternative means of supplementing family income. Sexual exploitation increased. High rates of teenage pregnancy were reported and many girls left school. The most direct and powerful preventive measure, to avoid such exploitation, would be the provision of adequate essential services and livelihoods.

Education

Around 60 per cent of the more than 100 million school-age children in the world who are not enrolled in school are living in crisis/post-crisis countries. Education services during conflict can protect children in many ways.⁵⁴ Education can act as a deterrent to re-entering the armed forces. It also has the potential to deter cycles of violence, through promoting peace and positive methods of discipline. Receiving an education is the common aspiration of most children affected by conflict.

Reconstruction and prevention of renewed conflict

Reintegrating children in communities

Support for the reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups has been ad hoc, and lacking in analysis and a strategic approach. Initiatives are often focused on the short term, and do not take the causes of recruitment into account. The focus is frequently on demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programmes. The 'success' of a formal DDR programme has often been calculated according to the number of guns collected, without considering whether conflict has broken out again, or whether children have successfully been reintegrated into their communities and can find alternative occupations to soldiering.

There is no realistic allocation of resources for reintegrating children associated with the armed forces back into their larger society. Unless there is a greater understanding of the ways families survive, and an emphasis on long-term reintegration, children will be extremely vulnerable to re-recruitment during any fresh outbreak of conflict.

Quick-fix financial payments, such as giving transitional allowances to children during the demobilisation in Liberia, are not the solution and place children at further risk. Any long-term support must take into account the needs of all children affected by conflict, not just those who were formerly associated with armed forces, in order to avoid resentment and stigma within communities. To enable children to benefit fully from skills training and income-generating programmes, all relevant organisations must acquire an understanding of how people earn a living in the areas that children previously involved in the conflict will be returning to. This requires long-term engagement and substantial commitment of resources.

Gender imbalances

At least a third of children associated with armed forces are, in most circumstances, girls. Yet girls often remain 'invisible' and doubly discriminated against. They often experience severe and distinct problems reintegrating into their communities. Girls are always under-represented during formal demobilisation (meaning that they 'informally' demobilise). Once they return to their communities, they face more problems than boys: girls are frequently stigmatised, may be seen as unmarriageable, and have few opportunities to earn an income (other than through commercial or transactional sex). Special attention must be paid to identifying, documenting and responding to their specific needs and the particular threats they face, even if they are not initially visible.

Education

One of the major frustrations that children associated with armed forces face on their return home is a lack of access to education. Providing education can act as an incentive for children not to re-join armed forces, at least while they remain minors.

Security and impartiality

Strengthening Africa's peacekeeping capacity demands high levels of investment and support – it cannot be seen as a cheap, politically expedient option. Peacekeepers need clear policy frameworks, operational

guidelines and appropriate measures of effectiveness and accountability to ensure that their behaviour meets international norms.

Recommendations

- All African states should sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the UNCRC on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, to impede the recruitment of children.
- An international system focusing on countries under stress, which would link livelihood analyses with decisions on strategic priorities and investments (both pre- and post-conflict) should be established. This should include food security provisions⁵⁵ during conflict in order to mitigate potential child exploitation and abuse.
- All those involved in African peacekeeping initiatives should be fully trained in the protection of children in conflict.
- An internationally agreed system for monitoring and reporting violations of children's rights should be introduced. A 'zero tolerance' stance should be adopted towards violence, exploitation and abuse of children, and vigorously press for the investigation into and prosecution of all individuals and groups suspected of rape, murder and violations against children in all circumstances.
- A broader definition of 'children associated with armed forces and groups' (rather than 'child soldiers') as articulated in the Cape Town Principles⁵⁶ should be adopted at all times.
- The demobilisation of children should be prioritised and resourced at all stages of conflict, so that they do not have to wait for peace to leave armed forces. A special pool of funding should be established to meet the specific needs of girls during demobilisation.
- Quality education should be provided as a means of protecting children during conflicts, and as a central part of any programme of post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.
- Wide respect for NGO principles of independence and impartiality, at all times, should be upheld and reinforced, particularly during conflict.

6 Transparency to tackle corruption

“Angola is a rich country but we are poor. The money that comes from the oil goes to the government, and us children don’t see anything.”

Young person, 16, Angola

Oil, gas and mining, referred to as extractive industries, are a major source of revenue in many African countries. However, such industries have often destabilised economies, increased poverty and fuelled conflict. It is children who suffer as a result, and who pay with their lives when resources are diverted from essential services such as health and education to pay for military or security spending, or corruption. In the next decade, oil exploration and revenues are set to expand significantly. The extra revenue provides a great opportunity to finance services and income support to reduce child poverty. But improved governance is vital to ensure that the money is used to help poor children and their families. This requires greater transparency of revenues and better accountability for the use of this money by governments and companies to local citizens.

Extractive industry revenues are central to the economy of many African countries and the region as a whole.

- In 2001, oil production generated 20 per cent of the combined gross domestic product (GDP) of sub-Saharan Africa.⁵⁷
- Oil revenues made up between 64 and 82 per cent of government revenues in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Nigeria.⁵⁸
- Between 2003–12, it is estimated that oil production will be worth more than US\$500 billion, representing a significant increase in petroleum revenues for some governments. For example, revenues will rise by 105 per cent in Angola, 46 per cent in Sudan, 36 per cent in Nigeria and 10 per cent in Congo-Brazzaville.⁵⁹

- In 2002, mining constituted about 8 per cent of the GDP of the Southern African Development Community and 43 per cent of southern Africa’s exports. Botswana, the DRC, Namibia and Zambia all derived over 50 per cent of their export earnings from mining.⁶⁰

Globally, Africa is becoming increasingly important to world energy supplies. It is seen as a key strategic source of oil, especially now that the security of supply in the Middle East is threatened by instability. Proven reserves of oil in sub-Saharan Africa have doubled in the last decade. The Atlantic Ocean off the coast of west and southern Africa continues to be one of the world’s most active oil exploration sites. Africa supplied just over 4 per cent of the world’s oil in 2003. It is expected to contribute a fifth of the global increase in production between 2004 and 2010. It is estimated that the US will source 15–25 per cent of its oil from Africa by 2015.⁶¹ The continent is also well placed to respond to rising global demand for gas.

The resource curse

These huge revenues would, on the face of it, appear to offer an important way of funding progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Paradoxically, in many countries the extractive industries have had a devastating impact. Conflict over resources, corruption and economic decline have pushed many children more deeply into poverty.

Countries earning a substantial share of their income from exporting primary commodities are significantly more at risk of conflict.⁶² Clear examples include Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and the Niger delta. As fighting escalated in the eastern parts of the DRC in 2001, more than four in ten babies were dying before their first birthday.⁶³ Diamonds and oil raised vital revenues for both sides of the civil conflict in Angola.

There is also a clear link between large-scale revenues derived from the extractive industries and corruption. Transparency International has shown how many of the African countries most dependent on natural resources have the highest levels of perceived corruption. For example, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), more than US\$1 billion of the Angolan Government's income from oil disappeared every year between 1997 and 2001 – that is 20 per cent of the total.⁶⁴ It is estimated that at least US\$4 billion of Nigeria's oil wealth was moved out of the country illegally during Sani Abacha's presidency in the 1990s.⁶⁵ This obviously diverts enormous resources from essential social investment.

Immense extractive industry revenues, when poorly managed, often have very negative impacts on a country's economy in ways that are known as 'Dutch disease'. The term refers to an economy in which the prices of goods tend to be volatile and create boom–bust cycles. Production typically involves high capital investment and is not labour intensive, and large inflows of foreign exchange lead to an appreciation of the real exchange rate. As competitiveness declines, other tradable sectors shrink and imports grow.

All these factors mean that vast extractive industry revenues have not usually reduced poverty. Between 1975 and 2000, GDP per capita actually declined in Nigeria, despite trillions of dollars from oil.⁶⁶ Compared to the sub-Saharan African average in 2000, the oil-producing countries have not achieved better social indicators than others in the region – literacy rates were no better and infant mortality was

actually higher in three of these countries. Globally, studies have shown links between oil dependency and high rates of child malnutrition, low spending on health and low school enrolment.

What is needed

Governance, accountability and transparency

So what makes the difference between natural resources acting as a curse or a blessing? The answer is governance – how resources are used and the accountability that drives this.

One key to accountability is transparency. Without access to information, citizens cannot judge performance. Bonanza economies like those created by extractive industry revenues are typically linked to weak systems of accountability for governments and the private sector, especially to the poorest and most marginalised groups. Resource-rich governments have tended to use low tax rates and patronage to dampen democratic pressures. They respond to unrest over growing inequality by spending money on internal security. Terms of extractive industry agreements between corporations and governments have remained largely secret, as have the size and destination of payments made in-country and into off-shore bank accounts.

But it does not have to be this way. At independence in 1966, Botswana was one of the poorest countries in the world. Now it is classified as an upper-middle income developing country. It had the highest rate of annual growth of any country in the world – an average of 12.3 per cent GDP per capita over 20 of the 35 years since its diamond cache was discovered in 1967.⁶⁷ Botswana is ranked by Transparency International as one of the most transparent countries in Africa. Diamonds account for more than 65 per cent of revenue of the Government of Botswana. Transparency in tax and royalty receipts has put the onus on the Government to widen the circle of beneficiaries beyond public officials and politicians.

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Botswana has used much of its wealth to invest in public services that benefit children; for example, by 1996 it had the second highest level of per capita spending on education in the world as a proportion of GNP. Improvements in under-five mortality have been spectacular, falling from 13.9 per cent in 1970 to 4.8 per cent in 1998, though improvements are now threatened by HIV/AIDS.⁶⁸

Publish What You Pay

International concern over lack of transparency led to the launch of the Publish What You Pay campaign in 2002 by Save the Children, Global Witness, the Open Society Institute, Transparency International and others. It now has over 220 members in 33 countries, with local NGO coalitions in Africa (Nigeria and Congo-Brazzaville) and in the North (the UK, France, Holland and the USA). The coalition was based on a single demand: mandatory disclosure by extractive industries of the payments they make to governments on a country-by-country basis. The campaign does not claim that revenue transparency alone would solve all the problems related to extractive industries, but that it is an essential step in making governments and companies more accountable for their actions. This is critical if natural resources are to be used to improve the lives of children and populations as a whole.

Working through host governments

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) came about partly as a response to the effectiveness of the Publish What You Pay campaign. It was launched by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in September 2002, and is a multi-stakeholder partnership involving northern and southern governments, oil, gas and mining companies, investors and civil society representatives.

In order to have real, long-term and large-scale impact, the EITI must address three main issues. First, equal attention needs to be given to both developing the capacity of civil society to understand and use the information to hold governments to account, and to developing the capacity of host governments⁶⁹

to disclose information and apply it to policy-making. So far, the initiative has focused more on building government capacity.

Secondly, more African governments must take the lead on the initiative within their own regions in order to increase its legitimacy and effectiveness. Other donor governments must increase their participation in the EITI and provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to host governments and civil society. Commitments to action on transparency, which include capacity building and technical assistance, have been made at two consecutive G8 Summits, 2003 and 2004, in the G8 Action Plan on Fighting Corruption and Improving Transparency. However, of the eight governments, only the UK and more recently France have made any progress.

Thirdly, there are no standards for involvement in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. To avoid the initiative becoming a smokescreen for inaction, it is vital to set out the roles and duties of all stakeholders who claim to be involved in an Implementation Compact. Home governments,⁷⁰ host governments, companies and NGOs should sign up for this compact at the planned high-level Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative conference in March 2005.

Working through companies, home governments and international financial institutions

Companies should publish the payments they make to governments. This would potentially enable host country citizens to access information about money received by their government from alternative sources. Individual company practice could be supported through sector-wide agreements. These agreements could include model contracts that do not contain confidentiality clauses covering revenue transparency, 'integrity pacts' that would require transparency among all those bidding for contracts, or investor principles that make transparency a condition for investment and offer cheaper loans for those complying.

However, the Publish What You Pay campaign is concerned that voluntary approaches will remain least likely to develop where they are most needed – where corruption is greatest and democracy weakest.

Home governments should therefore require companies registered or generating finance or insurance within their jurisdiction to publish their payments to host governments. This could be done through mechanisms such as company reporting legislation, accounting standards, stock market listing requirements and export credit conditionalities. To ensure a level international playing field between companies and between countries, this should be included in a framework of legal accountability for companies that would be globally consistent. International financial institutions (IFIs) should ensure that revenue transparency is a key part of conditionality for loans, grants and guarantees to governments and companies.

Role of the UN

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 18003 XVII states that the right of peoples to sovereignty over their natural resources must be exercised in the interest of citizens' well-being. This Resolution could provide the basis for the international community's support for a new UNGA resolution declaring support for greater extractive industry transparency.

Access to information legislation

True transparency requires government systems that respond to requests for information from citizens and across government departments. The last decade has seen a dramatic increase in access to information legislation, focusing mostly on state transparency. However, where there have been breaches to state transparency, few cases have been brought to court. Support should be given to testing their efficacy in delivering information on extractive industry revenue payments to the public sector. Citizens should have a right to information from private sector corporations or companies. South African law takes the most progressive approach by providing a comprehensive right to citizens to access information

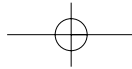
on the private sector where such access is “necessary for the protection or exercise of any other right”.⁷¹ For example, a citizen could access information on an oil company's payments to government if this was deemed a revenue that was paying for public services. Similar legislation should be adopted in other countries.

Judging transparency performance

Save the Children UK, with input from other NGOs, the UK Government and the private sector, is in the process of piloting a robust method for tracking the transparency performance of companies and governments. Support will be necessary for such ongoing evaluation and findings should be linked to incentives for good performance from investors and donors.

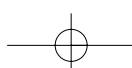
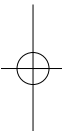
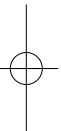
Recommendations

- Home governments should require extractive companies registered or generating finance or insurance within their jurisdiction to publish their payments to host governments using accounting standards, stock market listing requirements and export credit conditionalities.
- Home and host governments should support the development of access to information legislation and case law relating to extractive industry revenue disclosure vis-à-vis both the public and private sectors.
- All transparency initiatives must focus both on strengthening civil society's capacity to understand and use information on extractive industries and on improving governments' ability to generate and apply the information.
- African governments should take the lead within their territories, disclosing the revenues they receive from each company and/or requiring companies to publish their payments to government.
- African regional initiatives should support improved transparency such as the inclusion of Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative criteria in the New Partnership for Africa's Development peer review mechanism.



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- International financial institutions (IFIs) should make revenue transparency a requirement of all loans, investments, underwriting and technical assistance programmes. The G8 and other home governments should use their influence through IFI boards of directors to establish and implement this.
- An Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Implementation Compact that sets out the roles and duties of all stakeholders should be endorsed at the conference in March 2005. The G8 should endorse and fund the Compact as part of its commitment to the Transparency Action Plan.
- A UN General Assembly resolution should declare the international community's support for greater extractive industry transparency.



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