United Nations Children's Fund

Introduction

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board held its second regular session on 3-6 September 2013, during which they approved UNICEF's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan to succeed the 2006-2013 medium-term strategic plan.[1] The UNICEF Executive Board is preparing to hold its first regular session of 2014 on 4-7 February 2014 and a joint meeting with the executive boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN-Women, and the World Food Programme (WFP) on 3 February 2014.[2] This update will review the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan, which will guide UNICEF's work during the last years of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the beginning of the post-2015 agenda. It will also review the outcomes of the most recent sessions in order to examine the methods through which UNICEF implements policy and affects change. Finally, this update will explore the organizational structure of UNICEF to better understand the divisions of responsibility for policy implementation.

Recent Activities

The main theme of UNICEF's recent work has been shaping the Fund's goals for the post-2015 era. Since UNICEF has worked diligently toward the achievement of the MDGs, their expiration marks a shift in priorities across the UN development system. UNICEF is working to include the rights of children in the post-2015 agenda by creating a new set of priorities in its 2014-2017 Strategic Plan and by creating a budget that explicitly defines how resources should be allocated toward measurable outcomes.[3]

The proposed program of work for 2014 for the UNICEF Executive Board was introduced during the second regular session of 2013.[4] UNICEF's 2014 agenda will be guided by General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.[5] UNICEF will focus on implementing the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan and its integrated budget, which was proposed to help advance the goals outlined in the strategic plan.[6] The integrated budget identifies for the first time how resources are appropriated to specific programmatic outcomes.[7] The results of the 2006-2013 medium-term strategic plan and the 2012 end-of-cycle review guided UNICEF's integrated budgeting process in order to better allocate future funds to achieve specific, measureable goals rather than to address broader issue areas.[8] UNICEF worked closely with UNDP, UNFPA, and UN-Women to create integrated budgets and strategic plans to better leverage resources across the UN development system and to ensure that there are no gaps or duplication in areas of shared concern.[9]

The 2014-2017 Strategic Plan aims to build on the work of the MDGs, which are set to reach completion in 2015, and to shape the post-2015 agenda to include the needs of children around the world, especially the most disadvantaged.[10] The Strategic Plan takes into account the findings of the 2012 end-of-cycle review of the 2006-2013 UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (E/ICEF/2013/4).[11] The 2012 end-of-cycle review validated UNICEF's work in the areas of health, sanitation, education, HIV/AIDS, and child protection. It also recommended that

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[1] UNICEF, *The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged (E/ICEF/2013/21)*, 2013.
[2] UNICEF, *UNICEF Executive Board*, 2014.
[3] UNICEF, *Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2013 (E/2013/34/Rev.1)*, 2013, p. 48.
[4] Ibid, p. 47.
[5] Ibid, p. 47.
[6] Ibid, p. 48.
[7] Ibid, p. 54.
[8] UNICEF, *Opening Statement of the President of the Executive Board: Anthony Lake, UNICEF Executive Director Executive Board Meeting New York, NY 3 September 2013*, 2013, p. 16-17.
[9] Ibid.
[10] UNICEF, *The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged (E/ICEF/2013/21)*, 2013, p. 3.
[11] Ibid.

UNICEF focus on reducing malnutrition and increasing social inclusion.[12] In addition to creating specific targets for each focus area, the Strategic Plan also commits UNICEF to achieving these goals through increased partnerships with other UN agencies such as UNDP, UNFPA, and UN-Women, and with public-private partnerships, South-South and triangular cooperation, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).[13] UNICEF plans to mainstream both gender issues and social inclusion for those with disabilities throughout all programmatic activities carried out under the Strategic Plan.[14]

Recent Policy Outcomes

Outcomes from recent UNICEF reports to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) provide insight on the tools available to UNICEF to advance programmatic work. Among others, Member States requested that UNICEF: continue to help governments implement recommendations through technical assistance and capacity-building programs, especially low- and middle-income Member States; increase data collection to measure progress of the Strategic Plan including sex-disaggregated data and social inequalities among vulnerable groups; and that accountability, participation, transparency and non-discrimination be the guiding principles of UNICEF's operational work.[15] The UNICEF Executive Board also requested refinement of indicators and goals contained in the Strategic Plan and asked the Executive Director of UNICEF to present a mid-term review of the Strategic Plan during the Executive Board's annual session in 2016.[16] This will ensure that not only is UNICEF is achieving desirable outcomes, but that it is remaining on track with its integrated budget.[17]

Another major policy outcome is the entry into force on 20 December 2013 of the *Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure* three months after Costa Rica became the tenth signatory.[18] The Third Optional Protocol allows children to submit complaints about violations of their rights under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), the optional protocol on children in armed conflict, or the optional protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.[19] UNICEF continues to work toward universal ratification of the CRC and its three optional protocols.[20]

Policy Implementation

UNICEF reports to ECOSOC, which is in turn overseen by the General Assembly.[21] UNICEF reports to ECOSOC annually through the Executive Board, which consists of 36 elected members from each of the regional groups represented at the UN.[22] The Executive Board supports and supervises UNICEF's work by implementing policies passed by the General Assembly, monitoring the performance of programs, proposing new initiatives, and determining budgetary matters.[23] UNICEF's budgets are submitted yearly to the General Assembly and reviewed by the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.[24] The Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board is responsible for coordinating between the UNICEF secretariat and the Executive Board.[25]

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[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid, p. 4-5.
[14] UNICEF, *2014 Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP: Performance standard on gender mainstreaming across the SPs 2014-2017, 3 February 2014*, 2013.
[15] UNICEF, *Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2013 (E/2013/34/Rev.1)*, 2013, p. 59-60.
[16] Ibid, p. 75-76.
[17] Ibid.
[18] UNICEF, *UNICEF statement on the entry into force of the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 2013.
[19] NGO Committee on UNICEF, *Update on the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 2013.
[20] UNICEF, *UNICEF statement on the entry into force of the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 2013.
[21] Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board, *The UNICEF Executive Board: An Informal Guide*, 2013, p. 3.
[22] Ibid, p. 4.
[23] Ibid, p. 5.
[24] Ibid, p. 4.
[25] Ibid, p. 5.

UNICEF works in concert with several other UN development agencies. Since 1998, UNICEF has held annual joint meetings with the executive boards of UNDP and UNFPA.[26] The meetings have since been joined by WFP and UN-Women.[27] The meetings focus on coordination of efforts on shared goals, including humanitarian relief, preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS, the MDGs, and gender mainstreaming.[28]

Conclusion

As the UN's premier children's rights body, UNICEF is poised to shape the future of the global post-2015 agenda to include the rights of the child, especially the most disadvantaged. UNICEF's new strategic plan and frequent collaboration with other UN bodies ensures that children will play a central part in addressing the issues facing the international community today and into the future. Delegates should take care to consider issue areas in which UNICEF has pledged to focus, including reducing malnutrition, increasing social inclusion for those with disabilities, and gender mainstreaming.

The United Nations Children's Fund Executive Board at NMUN•NY 2014

NMUN-NY 2014 is simulating the Executive Board of UNICEF in terms of composition and size; however, delegates are not limited to the strict mandate of the Executive Board in terms of its role as a budgetary and administrative body. For NMUN-NY 2014, the committee has the ability to make programmatic and policy decisions on issues and topics within the mandate of UNICEF in line with the overall function of the organization.

Format: UNICEF is a resolution writing committee

Voting: Each Member State present may vote once on procedural and substantive matters. Matters are decided by a majority vote.

Membership: UNICEF Executive Board membership is comprised of 36 Member States with the allocation of seats among regional groups. Current membership is as follows:

Albania	Antigua and Barbuda	Belgium	Bulgaria
Canada	Central African Republic	China	Cuba
Dem. Republic of the Congo	Denmark	Djibouti	Egypt
Estonia	France	Gambia	Germany
Ghana	Greece	Guyana	Haiti
India	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Kenya	Namibia
Netherlands	Norway	Pakistan	Panama
Papua New Guinea	Republic of Korea	Russian Federation	Sweden
Switzerland	Thailand	United Kingdom	United States of America

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[26] Ibid, p. 8.
[27] Ibid, p. 8.
[28] Ibid, p. 8.

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NGO Committee on UNICEF. (2013). *Update on the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved 31 December 2013 from: http://www.ngocomunicef.org/2013/05/05/update-on-the-third-optional-protocol-to-the-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child/

> *The Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child went into effect on December 2013, three months after Costa Rica became the tenth signatory. As the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) governs UNICEF's work, the addition of another optional protocol is very significant. UNICEF continues to urge for the universal ratification of the CRC and its three optional protocols. The NGO Committee on UNICEF offers a succinct summary of the contents of the third optional protocol and links to more information.*

Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board. (2013). *The UNICEF Executive Board: An Informal Guide*. Retrieved 7 January 2014 from: http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/Executive_Board_-_An_Informal_Guide_-_2013_--_ENGLISH_-_27Dec12.pdf

> *This short guide on the structure and function of the UNICEF Executive Board is essential reading for those wishing to understand the division of responsibilities within UNICEF. In addition to describing the Executive Board, this guide explains the UN hierarchy that oversees UNICEF's work. It also provides details on UNICEF's work with other UN bodies to advance the well-being of children worldwide.*

United Nations Children's Fund. (2013). *Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2013 (E/2013/34/Rev.1)*. Retrieved 5 January 2014 from: http://www.undocs.org/E/2013/34/Rev.1

> *UNICEF's Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2013 is a good place to begin research on UNICEF's day-to-day work. The report details all proposals and discussions from each of its three meetings in 2013. Descriptions of requests from Members States to UNICEF will be particularly helpful for delegates to understand the types of actions UNICEF can take to advance its agenda.*

United Nations Children's Fund. (2014). *The State of the World's Children in Numbers 2014*. Retrieved 29 January 2014 from: http://www.unicef.org/sowc2014/numbers/documents/english/EN-FINAL%20FULL%20REPORT.pdf

> *As this report explains, credible data on children regarding the key areas UNICEF focuses on is crucial to UNICEF's ability to review its work and access success. As such, this document provides the most up-to-date data on many factors related to children that impacts the broad work of the Fund. Beyond providing data on this issue, this Report also provides updates on recent approaches.*

United Nations Children's Fund. (2013). *The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged (E/ICEF/2013/21)*. Retrieved 1 January 2014 from: http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2013-21-UNICEF_Strategic_Plan-ODS-English.pdf

> *UNICEF's new strategic plan will govern its work for the next three years. The plan covers an important transition period for the UN and UNICEF as the Millennium Development Goals end in 2015 and the global community formulates new markers to track development. UNICEF aims to place children at the center of the post-2015 agenda and will mainstream gender and disability rights throughout its programming.*

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United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2011). *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (A/RES/66/138)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 4 January 2014 from: http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/66/138

United Nations Treaty Collection. (2014). *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure*. Retrieved 4 January 2014 from: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11-d&chapter=4&lang=en

I. Preventing Child Mortality through Immunization

Introduction

The Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) approved the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MSTP), 2014-2017 on 6 September 2013.[29] This plan considers how to move UNICEF's work concerning health, including child immunization, forward through the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and into the post-2015 development agenda.[30] Per the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR), the MSTP strives to link resources with results and aligning its strategic plans with other funds and programmes.[31] UNICEF's results-based management requires a framework of the full results chain.[32] This begins with the impact level results in UNICEF's seven primary thematic areas, one of which is health.[33] The MTSP then identifies specific outcome level results and outputs that can be compared to established benchmarks, or the desired results of UNICEF's program strategies.[34]

The MTSP draft health results framework defines its desired impacts based on global commitments like A Promise Renewed, Decade of Vaccine (2011-2020) Goals, and the Global Action Plan for Pneumonia and Diarrhoea (GAPPD) Goals.[35] UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) have released several robust reports in the past few months to support these goals and the MDG-related immunization targets. Recent international meetings of bodies like the Strategic Advisory Group of Exports (SAGE) on Immunization and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations have provided recommendations on what strategies UNICEF should focus on in the near future. The recent months have also contained significant changes concerning polio eradication as Syria is reintroduced and India reaches its third year with no diagnosed cases. These issues encourage UNICEF to continue looking at how to build trust in immunization and access hard-to-reach populations.

Recent International Outcomes

UNICEF has recently published several significant documents pertaining to the prevention of child mortality through immunization, including the September 2013 release of *A Promise Renewed* initiative's first progress report.[36] This report examines under-five mortality levels and trends over the past two decades, analyzes progress towards MDG 4, and features national and global initiatives across sectors that facilitate progress towards greater child survival.[37] In November, the Polio Global Eradication Initiative published UNICEF's and WHO's Strategic Plan for Polio Outbreak Response in the Middle East.[38] In preparation for the 134th meeting of the Executive Board in January 2014, the WHO Secretariat also recently released a report on "Poliomyelitis: intensification of the global eradication initiative."[39] The report examines the four objectives of the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018 presented to the World Health Assembly in May 2013, including the barriers to achieving these objectives, the current state of financing, and 2014 program priorities.[40]

The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization, which advises WHO on its work concerning vaccines and immunization, held a meeting in early November 2013.[41] The body reviewed reports from the WHO Department of Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals and the GAVI Alliance, which presented to SAGE on the Alliance's Mid-Term Review, outlined GAVI's upcoming vaccine investment strategy, and previewed its 2016-

[29] Aroy, *UNICEF Executive Board adopts strategic plan and integrated budget for 2014-2017*, 2013.
[30] UNICEF, *The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2013/21)*, 2013.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid, p. 15.
[33] UNICEF, *Overview of the strategic focus of the MTSP 2014-2017*, 2013.
[34] Ibid.
[35] UNICEF, *MTSP 2014-17 Results Framework – Health (Draft)*, 2013.
[36] UNICEF, *Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed: Progress Report 2013*. 2013.
[37] Ibid.
[4] Polio Global Eradication Initiative, *Strategic Plan for Polio Outbreak Response in the Middle East*, 2013.
[39] World Health Organization, *Poliomyelitis: intensification of the global eradication initiative: Report of the Secretariat (EB134/35)*, 2013.
[40] Ibid,p. 1.
[41] World Health Organization, *Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization*, 2014.

2020 strategic plan.[42] The Group also reviewed the SAGE Decade of Vaccines (DoV) Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP) Working Group's 2013 assessment report. Outcomes of these reviews include concern about the escalating security situation in Syria, encouraging donors to strengthen and fund immunization efforts in these areas, and emphasizing the need for the GVAP to prioritize research concerning the implementation of vaccines in difficult-to-reach populations.[43] The upcoming World Immunization Week in April 2014 will discuss several of these issues and particularly aims to increase public knowledge and understanding of vaccination benefits.[44]

The international community marked World Pneumonia Day on 12 November 2013 to recognize efforts to prevent pneumonia, which is still the most prominent form of death globally for children under five.[45] Public campaigns promoted five effective interventions against pneumonia-related deaths, including the implementation of the 5-in-1 pentavalent vaccine.[46] The GAVI Alliance also helped Mauritania and Papua New Guinea introduce the pneumococcal vaccine as part of a 50-state roll out plan by 2015.[47] WHO and UNICEF took this day to release the Integrated Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Pneumonia and Diarrhoea (GAPPD), which introduces a prevention, protection, and control framework concerning pneumonia and diarrhea.[48] The International Vaccine Access Center (IVAC) published a subsequent Pneumonia and Diarrhea Progress Report 2013, which examines the 15 states with highest deaths due to pneumonia and diarrhea in children under five. It looks at the relation between these statistics with immunization types, efforts, and rates and notes the progress each state has made concerning the GAPPD.[49]

Recent Immunization Developments

Building Trust in Immunization
Considering India has not had a reported case of polio in three years, a WHO commission of experts will determine during a March 2014 meeting if the South-East Asia Region can now be considered free from poliovirus.[50] India provides an example of successful innovations that can be utilized in the remaining endemic countries.[51] For example, public opinion campaigns and use of community and religious leaders as vaccine ambassadors can be used in these communities and in Syria, where "vaccine hesitancy," or the process of suspect immunization rumors preventing vaccination uptake and community demand, is an increasing issue.[52] Other successful tools from India include the use of social mobilizers to encourage trust in the polio vaccine and Polio Surveillance System, which systematically tracked vaccination data and identify where the vaccine was still needed.[53]

Immunization for the Hard to Reach
Insecure conflict areas continue to hinder immunization efforts in polio endemic regions like northwest Pakistan and northeastern Nigeria, which has triggered reintroduction of the virus into the Middle East through vulnerable areas like Syria and Somalia.[54] This crisis has caused UNICEF to continue discussions on how to get immunizations into hard to reach places as it works with WHO on the Strategic Plan for Polio Outbreak Response in the Middle East.[55] One recent strategy in October 2013 saw UNICEF, WHO, and Syria's Ministry of Health partnering on a measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccination campaign through schools.[56] The second phase of the campaign got 1.6 million children under five children caught up on their vaccines through a series of promoted child health days at

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[42] World Health Organization, *Weekly epidemiological record*, 2014, p. 3.
[43] Ibid, p. 4.
[44] World Health Organization, *World Immunization Week: 24-30 April 2014*, 2014.
[45] World Health Organization, *Pneumonia still responsible for one fifth of child deaths*, 2014.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] IVAC, *Pneumonia and Diarrhea Progress Report 2013*, 2013, p. 1.
[50] World Health Organization, *India three years polio-free*, 2014.
[51] Polio Global Eradication Initiative, *India's Anniversary: Celebrating Three Years Polio-Free*, 2014.
[52] World Health Organization, *Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization*, 2014.
[53] Polio Global Eradication Initiative, *India's Anniversary: Celebrating Three Years Polio-Free*, 2014.
[54] World Health Organization, *Weekly epidemiological record*, 3 January 2014, p. 6.
[55] Polio Global Eradication Initiative, *Strategic Plan for Polio Outbreak Response in the Middle East*, 2013
[56] Rashidi, *A vaccination campaign hopes to reach 2.4 million children in the Syrian Arab Republic*, 2013.

health centers.[57] In order to reach high-risk children across conflict lines, UNICEF also partnered the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to distribute polio and MMR vaccinations.[58] UNICEF and WHO have also targeted children in displaced persons camps by implementing emergency response immunization campaigns after measles breakouts.[59]

Conclusion

UNICEF is in a critical position for considering its programmatic approaches to building trust in immunization and accessing children in hard-to-reach populations. The MTSP 2014-2017 outlines how UNICEF's programs are shifting to target goals past the MDGs and to focus more on outcomes and results. Recent months have seen several significant developments and publications on preventing child mortality through immunization, all of which provide recommended outcomes, outputs, and how UNICEF should focus its work to achieve these results. The international polio situation has also shifted as the South-East Asia region is on the verge of being declared polio free while Syria has experienced a reintroduction. UNICEF has several significant questions to consider while moving forward: Can UNICEF initiate campaigns with religious leaders in Syria like it successfully did in India to shift public opinion and make it more receptive to vaccines? How can UNICEF use India's Polio Surveillance System as a model to inform its work bringing immunizations to hard-to-reach children in conflict zones like Syria? How can UNICEF operationalize the desired outcomes of new plans like the GAPPD? How can UNICEF work with partners like WHO, the GAVI Alliance, and Member States to achieve the set immunization goals?

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[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] World Health Organization, *WHO and partners launch measles vaccination in Central African Republic*, 2014.

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http://www.polioeradication.org/Mediaroom/Newsstories/Newsstories2013/tabid/488/iid/347/Default.aspx

> *Delegates can turn to this resource to learn about the recent and significant milestone of India reaching three years with no cases of poliovirus. It summarizes the challenges India faced in this process and how it is now using these channels and tools to disseminate further vaccines. This article is most interesting for the analysis it provides of how India's lessons can be applied to the three countries that remain endemic. These include sharing technical expertise, monitoring tactics, and planning systems as innovations to help with polio eradication.*

Polio Global Eradication Initiative. (2013, November). Strategic Plan for Polio Outbreak Response in the Middle East. Retrieved 13 January 2014 from:
http://www.polioeradication.org/Portals/0/Document/InfectedCountries/MiddleEast/ME_StrategicPlan.pdf

> *This document is critical as it marks the reintroduction of the poliovirus in the Middle East after 15 years of eradication. It outlines UNICEF and WHO's strategic plan of immediate mass polio vaccination campaigns to prevent further spread of the virus, which entails reaching over 22 million children under age five, including those living in conflict areas. It performs a region risk assessment, summarizes lessons learned during past outbreak responses, and identifies other needed public health actions and responses from state actors in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Egypt.*

Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization Decade of Vaccines Global Vaccine Action Plan Working Group. (2013). *Assessment Report 2013*. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from:
http://www.who.int/immunization/global_vaccine_action_plan/OMS-IVB-AssessmentReport-20131212v5.pdf

> *The SAGE DoV GVAP assessment report provides concise and useful information concerning vaccine immunization. This is a great place for delegates to get an overview of the most recent wins, current challenges, and upcoming opportunities concerning international vaccine efforts. It also breaks down possible future actions and provides recommendations for a variety of international actors, making it an excellent resource for delegates looking to create action recommendations in their position papers.*

United Nations Children's Fund. (2013, September 9). *Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed: Progress Report 2013*. Retrieved 15 January 2014 from:
http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/APR_Progress_Report_2013_9_Sept_2013.pdf

> *UNICEF recently published the first report of its new initiative A Promise Renewed. This report provides a breadth of information on child survival as well as links to immunization facts, figures, and campaigns relevant to this topic. It analyzes under-five mortality trends and levels over the past 20 years, analyzes progress towards MDG 4, and notes child mortality causes and interventions, and features national initiatives across sectors to increase child survival rates. Delegates will find this useful as the most recent robust UNICEF report concerning child mortality and immunization, including recommendations for future UNICEF actions.*

World Health Organization. (2014, January 3). Weekly Epidemiological Record: Meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization, November 2013 – conclusions and recommendations. Retrieved 11 January 2014 from: http://www.who.int/wer/2014/wer8901.pdf

> *As a summary of the November 2013 meeting of SAGE, this record provides a wealth of information concerning immunization and vaccines. It summarizes reports from the WHO Department of Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals; the GAVI Alliance; and a variety of other advisory committees. Furthermore it directly summarizes the biggest challenges concerning many subtopics discussed here, including vaccination in conflict areas, polio eradication, and distribution channels of vaccines. Delegates can find many ideas and suggestions to help them develop future plans of action to discuss with the committee.*

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II. Addressing the Situation of Child Soldiers

Introduction

The Universal Children's Day on 20 November 2013 was the opportunity to call for a better protection of children.[60] As the atrocities ongoing in the Central African Republic led to the voting of a Security Council Resolution S/RES/2127 on 5 December 2013 authorizing a French intervention force, UNICEF's Executive Director, Anthony Lake, emphasized that "there must be no further delay in taking effective action".[61] Seven out of ten school students in the Central African Republic have not returned to school in a year and the number of children associated with armed forces and groups in the country has risen to 3,500.[62] This situation is the opportunity to finally put words into action about child soldiers.

Achieve Universal Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNICEF, while dealing with the topic of child soldiers, must consider the recent conclusion of the General Assembly Third Committee at its 17th and 18th Meetings.[63] In their public information GA/SHC/4073, Member States reminded the importance of children's right to achieve future prosperity, recognizing the long-term benefits of social investment in children well-being.[64] Member States reiterated their will to achieve universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).[65] These calls follow the statement of the Special Representative on Violence Against Children, Marta Santos Pais, and the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui during the 2013 Treaty Event of the United Nations, which put an emphasis on the CRC and its Optional Protocols.[66] The Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which entered into force in 2002, is still not ratified by 42 countries, among which 22 have not even signed the Optional Protocol.[67] Less than 30 countries are still to join the Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.[68] The Optional Protocol relating to communication procedures of children's complaints on the violations of their rights to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child was adopted in December 2011 but has only been signed by 37 countries and ratified by 6.[69] The ratification of these protocols remains an important target in order to address the situation of child soldier through relevant international instruments.[70]

Ending the Recruitment of Children as Soldiers

Significant progresses are made throughout the world to end recruitment and use of child soldiers and some initiatives are highlighted as demonstrating good practices and maintenance of vigilance. As an example, Chad had signed in 2011 an action plan with the United Nations to prevent the recruitment of children by its national security forces.[71] The Special Representatives visited Chad to assess the situation and identify challenges remaining to reach full compliance with the Action Plan.[72] The Special Representative observed a lack of free and universal birth registration system and the absence of a legal, disciplinary and judicial mechanism to implement child protection and ensure the investigation of children's rights violations.[73] In order to reach full implementation of the Action

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[60] Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children in Armed Conflict, *Universal Children's Day: Make Violations Against Children History in the DRC,* 2013.

[61] Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children in Armed Conflict. *Joint Press Release OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF: Children targeted in Central African Republic Atrocities*, 2013.

[62] Ibid.

[63] UN General Assembly. *Promoting Children's Rights Key to Future Development, Prosperity, GA/SHC/4073*, 2013.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children in Armed Conflict, *Universal Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols Needed to Protect Children Worldwide*, 2013.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, 66/138, 2011.

[70] UN General Assembly. *Promoting Children's Rights Key to Future Development, Prosperity, GA/SHC/4073*, 2013.

[71] Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children in Armed Conflict *Significant Progress by Chadian Authorities in the Implementation of the Action Plan to End Recruitment and Use of Children,* 2013.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

Plan, Chad government agreed to a ten measures Road Map.[74] This Road Map is the starting point of adoption of national laws criminalizing the use of children and can be used as a tool to maintain a certain level of commitment from national authorities.[75]

Following the same reasoning, the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict uses field missions as a new tool to review efforts made by government to eradicate the practice of recruiting child soldiers[76] Members visited Myanmar from 1 to 4 December to follow on the Secretary General's report on the situation of children and armed conflict in Myanmar adopted on 16 August 2013.[77] It was only the third visit made, after Nepal in November 2010 and Afghanistan in June 2011.[78] The opportunity to meet with representatives from the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting and the International Labour Organization, as well as civil society, enables to assess the situation and the remaining challenges on the Action Plan that was signed by Myanmar in June 2012.[79] Members of the Working Group look forward to remove Myanmar from the list of parties that have committed violations against children, which would require the signature and ratification of the Working of the Optional Protocol to the CRC.[80] Indeed, despite progresses, the Working Group is also working on the integration of a clause on the release and reintegration of children into ceasefire and peace talks.[81] Children are still present in the ranks of both the Burma Army and the opposition groups.[82]

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

According to the Paris Principles, DDR is the "process through which children transition into civil society and assume meaningful roles and identities as civilians".[83] Reintegration is considered sustainable once any political, legal, economic, and social conditions are secured to maintain life, livelihood and dignity.[84] As part of this process, it is necessary to hold accountable the persons responsible for recruiting child soldiers.[85] The decision of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) to uphold the conviction of former Liberian President, Charles Ghankay Taylor, sends a message to any political leader that could engage in such recruitment.[86] It is also part of the healing process for children that were victims of being recruited in armed forces and that had to participate actively in hostilities.[87] The criminal responsibility of the former head of state was established on the basis that he was planning and supporting crimes.[88] The SCSL confirms then the reasons that can lead an international tribunal to bring to justice those responsible for the crime of recruitment of children, either for planning it or supporting it.[89] This judgment from the SCSL takes into account the International Criminal Court role as well in prosecuting and convicting those responsible crimes against children.[90]

Conclusion

The topic involves several dimensions. It must consider several temporal dimensions: during conflict situations and in post-conflict situations, tackling the phase of preventing authorities from recruiting children to reintegrating them is society with dignity. It should encompass the dimension of resorting to international instruments such as the CRC

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.
[76] What's In Blue – Insights on the Work of the Security Council, *Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Myanmar Visit,* 2013.
[77] UN Security Council, *Conclusion on Children and Armed Conflict in Myanmar,* S/AC.51/2013/2, 2013.
[78] What's In Blue – Insights on the Work of the Security Council, *Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Myanmar Visit,* 2013.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Kaspar, *Use of Children Should Be a Violation of Any Ceasefire*, 2013.
[82] Ibid.
[83] The Paris Principles, *Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, 2007.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid,p. 11.
[86] Child Soldiers International, *Special Court for Sierra Leone – Appeals Chamber confirms conviction of Charles Taylor,* 2013.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.

and its optional Protocols, but also take into consideration what is happening on the fields, and case-to-case solutions. The work of the committee should take all these aspects into consideration and get inspiration from the good practices highlighted.

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Child Soldiers International (2013, September 26). *Special Court for Sierra Leone – Appeals Chamber confirms conviction of Charles Taylor* [Website]. Retrieved December 18, 2013 from: http://www.child-soldiers.org/news_reader.php?id=704

> *This article from a Non-Governmental Organization focuses especially on a procedure of accountability for those responsible for recruiting children in armed forces. It is a relevant case study for delegates to understand the importance of justice in dealing with the topic of child soldiers. It is the last step to avoid any resurgence of recruitment.*

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children in Armed Conflict (2013, November 25). *Significant Progress by Chadian Authorities in the Implementation of the Action Plan to End Recruitment and Use of Children.* Retrieved December 18, 2013 from: http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-release/implementation-of-action-chad/

> *This report from the Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict would provide delegates with insights on how to handle post-conflict situations. The case study of Chad is relevant as regards to what can be implemented at a national level to end recruitment of child soldiers. Delegates will understand the necessity to adapt a global action plan to every situation.*

The Paris Principles – Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (2007). Retrieved December 18, 2013 from: http://www.unicef.org/emerg/files/ParisPrinciples310107English.pdf

> *Delegates should keep in mind the Paris Principles for any work on this topic. They cover every facet of the topic from unlawful recruitment to release, reintegration and justice. It is a really comprehensive handbook, so delegates may pay particular attention to sections on the prevention and education through local initiatives as well as the sections on "ending the culture of impunity" and "truth-seeking and reconciliation mechanism" for post-conflict situations.*

What's In Blue – Insights on the Work of the Security Council (2013, November 27). *Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Myanmar Visit* [Website]. Retrieved December 18, 2013 from: http://www.whatsinblue.org/2013/11/working-group-on-children-and-armed-conflict-myanmar-visit.php

> *This article will make delegates understand how UNICEF must work in cooperation with other UN committees such as the Security Council. It would help them understand the importance of monitoring and reporting and how this task may be handled. The case study of Myanmar is an illustration delegates can focus on to understand better how to put into practice such procedures.*

United Nations General Assembly. (2013, October 18). *Promoting Children's Rights Key to Future Development, Prosperity, CA/SHC/4073*, Department of Public Information, New York. Retrieved December 18, 2013 from: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/gashc4073.doc.htm

> *This resolution is the result of the debate between UNICEF and the General Assembly Third Committee. It is a relevant document for delegates to understand the importance of the topic and see how it belongs to a broader debate on the importance of child as bearer of development for the world. Delegates would be conscious of the wider debate in which their work will take place.*

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United Nations General Assembly. (2013). *Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict* (A/67/845). Retrieved December, 18 2013 from: www.undocs.org/a/67/845

United Nations Security Council (2013, August 13). *Conclusion on Children and Armed Conflict in Myanmar*, S/AC.51/2013/2. Retrieved December 18, 2013 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/AC.51/2013/2

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III. Equitable Access to Education for Children with Disabilities

Introduction

Approximately one billion persons live with some form of disability, which makes people with disabilities the world's largest minority.[91] And 93 million of them are children.[92] In this regard, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) focuses mainly on the access to education for children with disabilities, promoting social inclusion. UNICEF is committed to equity and diversity and calls for non-discriminatory education systems.[93]

On 3 December 2013, the twenty-first International Day of Persons with Disabilities took place around the theme "Break barriers, open doors: for an inclusive society for all".[94] It was the opportunity to raise awareness on disability and accessibility and to reassert the guiding lines of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.[95] It represented a call for concrete actions to take place in order to include disability in all aspects of development, including education.[96] Measures to limit the barriers that discriminate children with disabilities and that prevent them from being treated equally in the society, such as negatives attitudes or legislation were mainly debated on this day.[97]

The Post-2015 agenda

Making inclusive education a part of the post-2015 development agenda is one of the main targets.[98] On 23 September 2013, the High Level Meeting on Development and Disability (HLMDD) gathered Member States around the theme "the way forward: a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond".[99] Taking place at a strategic timing two years from 2015, the HLMDD ended with the adoption of an action-oriented document providing policy guidance.[100] It aims at promoting concrete actions to strengthen global efforts for the inclusion of persons with disabilities and integrate the issue of disability into the proposed agenda for post-2015.[101] It emphasizes the fact that "buildings and facilities should be designed to accommodate access and use by those who are disabled".[102]

Right after the HLMDD on 24 September 2013, the Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities (GPcwd), created in 2012, gathered for the second time in its history.[103] The GPcwd discussed the structure of its network of more than 240 organizations, designing the thematic development agenda for post-2015.[104] The GPcwd Task Force on Inclusive Education deals specifically with the topic of education, focusing on the promotion of inclusive learning spaces, investments in teacher training and progress monitoring.[105] It defined its Work Planning for the period 2013-2015, focusing especially on knowledge management and monitoring activities to enhance the expertise network on all the comparative advantages of each region.[106]

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[91] UN Enable, *International Day of Persons with Disabilities - 3 December 2013*, 2013, [Website].
[92] WHO, *World Report on Disability,* 2011.
[93] UNICEF, *International day of persons with disabilities*, 2013, [Website].
[94] Ibid.
[95] UN Enable, *December Newsletter*, 2013.
[96] UN Enable, *International Day of Persons with Disabilities - 3 December 2013*, 2013, [Website].
[97] UNICEF, *International day of persons with disabilities*, 2013, [Website].
[98] UNESCO, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report – 2013/4 Report Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all*, 2014.
[99] UN Enable, *December Newsletter*, 2013.
[100] Ibid.
[101] UN General Assembly, *High Level Meeting on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals and Other Internationally Agreed Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities, Sixty-eight meeting, A/68/PV.3,* 2013, p. 1.
[102] Ibid,p. 2.
[103] UN Enable, *December Newsletter*, 2013.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities, *Notes – Education Task Force Meeting*, 2013, p. 3.

The Education For All (EFA) Movement also targeted aid and external financing as an important resource for financing inclusive education system.[107] They highlight the role of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and its Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to contribute to this financing, even if its role must be enhanced.[108] Indeed, the EFA emphasizes on the failure of DAC donors to meet their commitment made in Dakar in 2000 that a lack of resources would not be the reason why a country is not achieving education for all.[109] The EFA monitoring report highlights that the post-2015 development and education framework should focus on the increase of aid, and their effective allocation.[110] Several ways of channeling funds are available. Aid can be distributed through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), but this route does not strengthen government systems in the longer term.[111] Another way is to fund directly the recipient government through general budgetary support, which then enables the government to prioritize how to implement its programs.[112] Another initiative is to channel aid to multilateral organizations through earmarked funding for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). This initiative has the advantage to ensure a better tracking of the funds and avoid any embezzlement given the fact that the GPE determines the allocation of funds.[113] However, the EFA also insists on domestic financing, meant to remain the most important source for achieving education goals, exploring the possibility to widen the tax base and share more effectively public spending.[114] The post-2015 agenda is the opportunity for Member States to be reminded of their commitment, the necessity of multilateral action and to explore the new trends in development finance.[115]

Creating Inclusive Education Systems

The HLMDD outcome document highlighted the necessity for technologies to improve the quality of life and to fully integrate persons with disabilities into the mainstream of social and work activity and life".[116] Focusing on the role of technology and investments in innovative sciences in promoting education for all children, the World Intellectual Property Organization held a panel on the 2013 International Day for Persons with Disabilities to discuss the benefits of the Marrakesh Treaty.[117] The Diplomatic Conference adopted this Treaty on 27 June 2013 to facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled.[118] It aims at facilitating cross-borders exchanges of accessible format copies as outlined in its Article 5.[119]

Kuwait has proven to be at the origin of some initiatives to create inclusive education systems.[120] Under its Framework Agreement signed with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 20 November 2013, Kuwait agreed to establish a Center of excellence for persons with disabilities.[121] It aims at building institutional and technical capacity to deliver inclusive education for persons with disabilities.[122] It focuses on technical support to be provided at national level for data collection and analysis of the education contexts.[123] It is a relevant illustration of a localized application of the EFA movement.

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[107] UNESCO, "Trends in aid to education: lessons for post-2015", *Education for All Global Monitoring Report – Policy Paper 11*, 2013, p. 1.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid, p. 2.
[111] Ibid, p. 7.
[112] Ibid, p. 6.
[113] Ibid. p. 7.
[114] Ibid, p. 9.
[115] Ibid, p. 10.
[116] UN General Assembly, *High Level Meeting on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals and Other Internationally Agreed Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities, Sixty-eight meeting, A/68/PV.3*, 2013, p. 2.
[117] UN Enable, *Marrakesh VIP Treaty on Access to Books and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities*, 2013, p. 1.
[118] World Intellectual Property Organization, *Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled*, 2013, p. 1.
[119] Ibid, p. 5.
[120] UNESCO, *UNESCO and Kuwait conclude agreement on inclusive education for persons with disabilities*, 2013, [Website].
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.

Conclusion

In preparing their position on the topic, delegates must consider the topic in the perspective of the post-2015 development agenda as many commitments are today being discussed with deadline going beyond 2015. They should also put the role of technology and innovations at the heart of their recommendations, as a powerful tool to enhance education for all. The work of the committee should take all these aspects into consideration and reflect this into practical actions on this topic.

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http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=259

> *Delegates should always bear in mind the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It represents a powerful tool for inclusive development, and is at the origin of any thoughts on inclusive education. In relation to the topic at hand on education, delegates must pay particular attention to the content of its Article 24.*

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (2013, December). "Trends in aid to education: lessons for post-2015", *Education for All Global Monitoring Report – Policy Paper 11*. Retrieved December 26, 2013 from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002253/225300E.pdf

> *This Policy Paper provides insightful information on development finance, as part of the post-2015 agenda. Delegates must understand the importance of development finance for this topic and the different means of channeling aid. This policy paper makes an assessment of the situation of aid for development over the past decade. Delegates may then reflect this in their recommendations, understanding the underlying conditions for a certain type of development finance.*

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (2014, January). *Education for All Global Monitoring Report – 2013/4 Report Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all.* Retrieved December 26, 2013 from: www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2013/

> *This report that would only be released on 29th January is essential for delegates as it emphasizes on the topic of equity and quality of education. It describes essential processes of how to invest in reforms that promote equitable learning and put the teachers at the heart of the reform. It draws the framework of the long-term prospect of societies.*

United Nations General Assembly (2013, September 23). *High Level Meeting on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals and Other Internationally Agreed Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities, Sixty-eight meeting, A/68/PV.3*. Retrieved December 26, 2013 from:
www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/PV.3

> *The High Level Meeting was a milestone on topics covering the rights of persons with disabilities. Delegates should be aware of the conclusion of this meeting as detailed in this outcome document. Particular attention may be brought to the words of Ms. Cisternas Reyes, speaking on behalf of Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Mr. Vardakastanis, on behalf of the European Disability Forum.*

World Intellectual Property Organization (2013, July 31). *Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled,* VIP/DC/8 REV. Retrieved December 26, 2013 from: http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/treaties/en/ip/marrakesh/pdf/Marrakesh_Treaty.pdf

> *This constitutes a relevant instrument to illustrate how technology can be at the service of development. Delegates should explore this Treaty and understand the underlying conditions of its Article 5. It is also a good example of cooperation being developed between different UN Agencies.*

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