

The Rights of the Child in Swedish Development Cooperation



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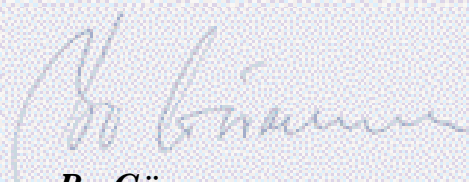
Foreword

Children and child-rues have always been important in Swedish international development cooperation, particularly in the fields of health, education and culture.

However, the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are not limited to isolated sectors. In a child rights' perspective girls and boys are also actors who shall be given the right and the opportunity to participate in the development of society.

It is Sida's responsibility to make children and their rights visible in Swedish development cooperation. Guidelines for the integration of children's rights into Swedish bilateral development cooperation are given in this position paper.

The guidelines are primarily intended for members of staff at the embassies and in Stockholm, but I hope that Sida's partners in cooperation will also find them useful.



Bo Göransson
Director General, Sida

Summary

Ten years have now passed since the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the United Nation's General Assembly. During this time it has been ratified by almost all countries in the world. The CRC is a legally binding, international treaty and, at the same time, a political vision of a society good for children.

Sweden gives high priority to child rights issues in both domestic policies and in programmes of international cooperation. In its annual directives to Sida in 1999 the Ministry for Foreign Affairs writes:

"Sida shall continue its work to develop a systematic child rights' perspective in international development cooperation by, among other things, monitoring and implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child and commitments relating to rights and conditions of children made at UN conferences. Methods and instruments shall be developed which promote the implementation of the rights of children in programmes of development cooperation. The different conditions for girls and boys and of children in especially difficult circumstances shall be given special attention."

~ The Convention on the Rights ~ of the Child

With their own human rights convention children have been made visible as citizens with rights of their own and been given a place on the political agenda. Children have the right to demand that their situation is given consideration in all decision-making processes affecting them. A change in attitudes towards girls and boys respectively is necessary. The state has the overall responsibility for implementing children's rights through legislation and the public administration, in public and private institutions, by providing support and education for parents, and information on the CRC.

The CRC is based on four fundamental principles:

- ~ *the equal rights of all children, prohibition of discrimination (article 2)*
- ~ *the best interests of the child, a primary consideration in all decision-making (article 3)*
- ~ *the right to life, survival and development to the maximum extent of the available resources (articles 4 and 6)*
- ~ *the right to participation (article 12)*

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child interprets the other articles in the CRC on the basis of these fundamental principles.

The CRC is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights (CPCR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). These conventions are, in principle, age-neutral – they apply to “each and everyone” and thus give children the same rights as adults. In the CRC the areas covered by the various rights (the fundamental freedoms, the fundamental needs, and protection against abuse and exploitation) are merged into one convention. Their indivisibility and interdependence is hereby made obvious.

The CRC is the only human rights convention ratified by all Sweden's partner countries. It thus provides an excellent platform for Sida's work with human rights. With the common norms in the CRC as a point of departure, a dialogue can be conducted with partner countries on the human rights of each and everyone, on the ratification of other conventions, on the withdrawal of reservations, and on the changes required for the fulfilment of human rights commitments.



~ *The CRC in Sida's work* ~

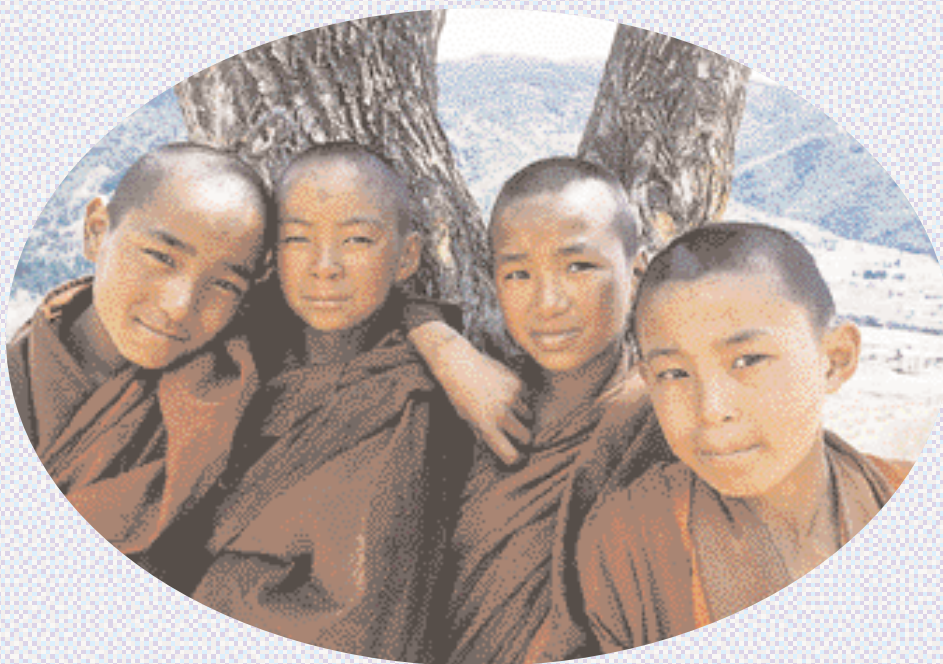
The process of developing a child rights' perspective in Sida's work is based on the CRC's principles on non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development, and the participation of the child. The focus is not primarily on certain groups of vulnerable children, but on the rights and needs of all children in all Sida support. Respect for the child shall be a natural component in all activities.

Recognising that children have rights of their own means that attitudes towards children and their role in society must change. Sida's development cooperation shall contribute to this process by making children and their rights visible and by supporting projects which strengthen respect for children's rights. Respect for children, for their right to participation and to education, care and security shall permeate all Sida's activities.

~ *Participation* ~

The right to participate in and exert an influence on the development of society through elections is restricted in national legislation to those who are of age. However, the CRC states that every child has the right to freely express opinions in all matters affecting the child and that these views shall be given due weight in relation to the maturity and age of the child. Adults who make decisions affecting children shall have the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. The CRC also emphasises the right of the child to freedom of expression including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds.

Children constitute approximately half of the population in Sida's partner countries. Their experience and expectations are therefore important for the development of society in these countries. The right of girls and boys to participate is of importance for most areas of development cooperation. It is a ques-



tion of changing attitudes and behaviour of both children and adults so that children are given the opportunity to express their opinions and to have them respected.

Development cooperation should:

- ~ contribute to changing attitudes towards girls and boys in accordance with the understanding of childhood and vision of the CRC;*
- ~ make children visible as partners in society;*
- ~ develop and strengthen opportunities for children and young people to participate in the planning and decision-making which affect their lives (education, health care, rural development, housing, job opportunities etc);*
- ~ support education programmes on children and child rights in society and in the democratic structures;*
- ~ include the expectations and experience of children and young people in planning and decision-making.*

~ Non-discrimination ~

The States Parties have undertaken to respect and ensure the rights set forth in the CRC in respect of all children within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind. The rights apply to all children, girls and boys, children with disabilities and without, children in rural areas and in urban, young children and teenagers. The right to an identity, to the registration of birth, to a name and nationality is a precondition for enjoying all other rights. Without identification papers it is difficult to claim any other rights. Civil and political rights as well as social, economic and cultural rights are linked to the individual.

In order to diminish and counteract discrimination it is necessary that attitudes are changed, that legislation and legal practices are revised, and that measures are taken to assist and support those children whose rights are violated. The CRC gives prominence, in separate articles, to three groups of children whose rights are often violated and who

need extra support: disabled children, refugee children and children who are members of ethnic minorities and indigenous populations.

Programmes of development cooperation should:

- ~ contribute to changing attitudes and values leading to discrimination against children and to violation of their rights, as well as to discrimination against various groups of children (in the legal system, public health and medical services, and education etc);
- ~ contribute to ensuring that legislation and legal practices give all children the same rights and that discriminated children are included in programmes and, where necessary, are given support;
- ~ strengthen the legal rights and the protection of children against abuse and exploitation.

~ The best interests of the child ~

The question of the “best interests of the child” cannot be answered in a clear-cut and conclusive manner – it is dependent on culture, time, geography, knowledge and the social situation of the child. The situation of children varies depending on whether they are single children or have many brothers and sisters, whether they are girls or boys or whether they live in Sweden or in Laos. The pronouncements made by scientists today on what is best for children can change tomorrow, just as they have done throughout history. Decision-makers need to analyse the situation of girls and boys and the consequences of different possible courses of action to enable them to make decisions based on what appears best for the child. An important part of the analysis is the knowledge and opinions of the children themselves. For local administration, methods need to be developed to explore and collect the views of children and to analyse and assess the consequences of different proposals.

Programmes of development cooperation should:

- ~ give the “best interests of the child” priority based on an assessment of the consequences of the support for the children;
- ~ make child impact assessments.

***~ The right to life, survival ~
and development***

The fourth fundamental principle of the CRC is the right of the child to life, survival and development to the maximum extent of available resources in society. By ratifying the CRC the state assumes the responsibility to guarantee that all children have their basic needs provided for. The CRC also emphasises the need for international cooperation and support to developing countries in implementing, in particular, the economic, social and cultural rights.

All children have the right to the highest attainable standard of health, to education to develop their full potential, to the standard of living and social environment necessary for their physical, mental and social development, and to rest and leisure, play and recreation.

Programmes of development cooperation should:

- ~ contribute to developing economic, social and political structures which enable communities and parents to guarantee the fundamental needs of children;
- ~ contribute to implementing free and compulsory primary education for all children and providing access to further general education and vocational training;
- ~ contribute to ensuring that the living conditions and environment of children are not harmful to their health and that children have access to public health and medical services and rehabilitation;
- ~ support programmes which increase access to resources and job opportunities for poor young people and families;
- ~ support the development and introduction of labour legislation which protects children from economic exploitation and hazardous work and which regulates minimum ages, working conditions and working hours;
- ~ create the space and opportunity for creative play and recreational activities.

1. A Swedish focus on the rights of the child

It is now ten years since the CRC was adopted by the UN General Assembly. During this period it has been ratified by almost every state. The CRC is a legally binding, international treaty and, at the same time, a political vision of a society good for children. In two documents produced in 1997/98 the Swedish Government has given prominence to the work on human rights and democracy in Swedish foreign policy and Swedish international development cooperation.¹ This is of utmost importance for children who constitute almost half of the world's population. If respect for human rights can be increased, the conditions under which children are brought up will improve and their chances for a life in dignity will increase. With the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, the world community has underlined that human rights are also children's rights. Children are important participants in society and can actively contribute to the development of a culture of democracy – and to the contrary. The Government writes:²

“Democracy requires democrats. The development of a democratic culture is perhaps the most important key to real democracy where people exercise their civil rights and freedoms.”

The culture of democracy implies that people learn to argue for their opinions, and to listen to the arguments of others, that they are prepared to change views or to accept defeat in a vote. The earlier this is practised and learnt, the better a democratic culture is established. Here school is an important instrument. When children are treated in a way that promotes their sense of dignity and value, their respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others is strengthened.

Children have always been an important target group of Swedish international development cooperation, primarily in the social sectors. The survival of small children was an early focus of the health support and the education support was mainly directed towards expanding primary education. Children have been main recipients of aid and the target group for care and attention of adults. At the same time they have been almost invisible in the planning and implementation of support in other sectors. They have been included under the generic terms “family” or “women and children”.

Sweden took an active part in the drawing up of the CRC and was one of the first countries to ratify it in 1990. Sweden was also one of the driving forces for the World Summit for Children in New York in 1990. Since 1992 the Government has emphasised, in its official communications and annual directives to Sida that child rights shall permeate all development cooperation. In its annual directives for 1995/96, Sida was instructed to focus more specifically on children and to be more active in child-related issues internationally. In its report on international development cooperation for 1996/97, the Swedish Parliament's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs writes:

“Awareness of the significance of child rights has increased internationally, for example through the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by almost all states. The challenge now is to implement the principles and norms contained in the Convention. In this respect the principle of the best interests of the child, as well as activities to combat discrimination, shall guide Swedish programmes of development cooperation.”



In the autumn of 1997 the Swedish Children's Committee produced its report "The Best Interests of the Child, a primary consideration". The Committee states that giving a child perspective to development cooperation means both direct support for children and ensuring that development cooperation in general really benefits children and takes their specific needs into consideration. The Committee writes:

"it is important that the support is adapted to the child and to the best interests of the child, that children are seen as social, political and economic beings and that there is an understanding of the roles they play in the family and in society.

*.... We think that Sida should be obliged to make child impact assessments of its activities to guarantee that the child perspective is given attention and has an impact on Swedish development cooperation."*³

Sida is working on the integration of a child rights' perspective into international development

cooperation. Knowledge and awareness of child rights is part of Sida's work for human rights. Children as individuals and as participants in society need to be made visible in all international development cooperation and the consequences on children need to be analysed. Since the autumn of 1998 there has been a training programme for all Sida staff on the CRC. The aim of the programme is to ensure that child rights permeate all international development cooperation – "mainstreaming." The basic principles of the CRC relating to non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development, and to participation shall provide guidance. The focus is not primarily on individual groups of vulnerable children, but on the rights and needs of all children in all programmes, so that respect for children becomes a natural part in all contexts. Programmes of development cooperation which include all children contribute to preventing children from being forced to live under exceptional-



ly difficult circumstances. By focusing on programmes for special groups, it is easy to lose the rights' perspective i.e. the right of all children to respect, participation, security and welfare. This does not preclude giving special attention and support to children living under especially difficult circumstances.

In its annual directives to Sida for 1999, the Government writes:⁴

“Sida shall continue its work to develop a systematic child rights’ perspective in international development cooperation by, among other things, monitoring and implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child and commitments relating to rights and conditions of children made at UN conferences. Methods and instruments shall be developed which promote the implementation of the rights of children in programmes of development cooperation. The different conditions for girls and boys and of children in especially difficult circumstances shall be given special attention.”

The CRC is a legally binding international treaty. It also represents a political vision of a society good for children. The commitments and action plans of the major UN conferences constitute agreements on programmes and strategies for the achievement of objectives. Sida shall also actively contribute to the follow-up of the World Summit for Children and to the preparatory work for the UN General Assembly’s Special Session in the year 2001 (UNGASS 2001).⁵



2. *The Convention on the Rights of the Child – a part of international law*



2.1 Historical background

The idea of protecting children and safeguarding their right to survival and development through international agreements can be traced back to the beginning of the 1900s. The very first treaty, produced in 1919, takes up the conditions of children in working life and is an agreement between the trade union movement, the employers and the state within the framework of the ILO.⁶ It was brought about in reaction to the conditions of working children in the mines and textile industry during the early stages of industrialisation.

~ Declaration of the rights ~ of the child – 1924

After the First World War the International Save the Children Union took the initiative to establish a code or declaration on child rights. The first international agreement on the rights of the child was adopted by the League of Nations in 1924. **The principle of universality (the equal rights of all children regardless of race, religion, sex) was a fundamental principle, as was the principle of the common responsibility of everyone for all children.** The declaration underlined the rights of all children (friend or foe) to development, survival and protection. The rights to education, a tolerable standard of living and health and medical care were also included, as well as the right of children to respect for their person and dignity.

~ *The Universal Declaration ~*
~ *of Human Rights – 1948*

After the Second World War the Universal Declaration on Human Rights was drawn up. It was adopted in 1948 as the basic document for the newly formed United Nations. **The Declaration applies to each and everyone without reference to age and thereby recognises that children have the same rights as adults without any restrictions except in one respect. The right to enter into marriage only applies to adults.** The article on the right to vote does not contain any age restrictions, it speaks of each and everyone.⁷

The Declaration covers rights in three areas:

- *basic freedoms*
- *basic needs*
- *protection against abuse and exploitation.*

~ *The UN's Declaration on the Rights ~*
~ *of the Child – 1959*

The special declaration on the rights of the child was extended somewhat and in 1959 the **UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child** was adopted by the General Assembly. Prior to the International Year of the Child, 1979, Poland proposed that **the Declaration should be changed into a binding convention.** The development of the text of the CRC took place over a period of ten years in a working group within the UN Commission on Human Rights. Many representatives of non-governmental organisations also participated. As a starting point for the development of the text, Poland's proposal was used which was based on the earlier UN Declaration, as well as on other international conventions on human rights, in particular the two main Covenants of 1966⁸ and the Geneva conventions of 1949. It was possible to reach agreement on certain parts of the proposal while other areas were more controversial.

~ *The UN Convention on the Rights ~*
~ *of the Child – 1989*

In November 1989 the CRC was adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly. Within just one year it had been ratified by sufficiently many states to

enter into force. After ten years it is the convention which most states have ratified, only Somalia and USA have not done so. Sweden ratified the CRC in September 1990. When the text of a convention has been produced, it shall first be adopted by the General Assembly and thereafter it is open to signature by states. It is the governments that, by signing the convention, declare that the state wishes to accede to the convention. The decision on accession/ratification shall then be made by parliament which has the legislative power. Prior to a decision on ratification a study is made of how well the country's laws correspond to the convention and if any amendments to the legislation are needed.

2.2 The basic principles and vision of the CRC

With a human rights convention of their own, children have been made visible as citizens with rights and have been given a place on the political agenda. Goodwill and care are not sufficient. **In all decision-making processes affecting children, they have the right to demand consideration for their situation. And the state has the overall responsibility to implement the rights of the child through legislation, the public administration, public and private institutions, support and education programmes for parents and through the provision of information on the CRC.**

Childhood covers the period from the birth of the totally dependent infant to the coming of age of the child, 18 years later, when the child is expected to fend for herself/himself and assume full responsibility for her or his actions. The rights of the child include both the rights of children to care and protection as dependent and vulnerable, and the rights of children to respect and participation in society, as individuals on a full and equal basis. As children grow older their right to participate and to exert an influence becomes more important and greater demands can be made on them in respect of participation. The articles of the CRC exist in the tension between these two extremes which characterise the upbringing and development of the child.



The CRC is based on four fundamental principles:

- ~ *equal value and rights of all children, prohibition of discrimination (article 2)*
- ~ *the best interests of the child, a primary consideration in all decision-making (article 3)*
- ~ *the right of the child to life, survival and development to the maximum extent of the available resources (articles 4 and 6)*
- ~ *the right to freely express views and to be heard (article 12)*

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child interprets the other articles in the CRC on the basis of these four fundamental principles.

~ Links with other conventions ~

The CRC is mainly based on the two main covenants, the CCPR and the CESC, and has been both developed and restricted from a children's perspective. With integration of both human rights domains into the CRC, their dependence on each other, their indivisibility is emphasised.

~ The responsibilities of parents ~

As in the two main covenants, the CRC states that it is the parents and the extended family that constitute the natural base for the child. It is the parents who have the main responsibility for the child's upbringing and development and "who have to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognised in the present Convention".⁹ **The responsibility of the state is primarily to support the parents (and other legal guardians of the child) when they exercise their rights and**

duties in respect of the child. The CRC also calls upon the state to assume responsibility for protecting the child against neglect, exploitation and abuse while in the care of parents and the obligation to take care of the child if it proves to be necessary.

~ *Prohibition of discrimination* ~

In the basic article on the prohibition of discrimination (article 2), the CRC adds that disability may not be used as a reason for denying a person her/his rights. This is an addition to the list in the CCPR. The article also states that no one may be discriminated against on account of the status of her/his parents. The rights apply to every child within the state's jurisdiction. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child includes here also children who are residing illegally in a country, for example hidden refugee children.¹⁰ On the basis of article 2 the entire CRC applies to all children; in addition there are three articles which give prominence to the rights of three special groups of children: article 22 on refugee children, article 23 on mentally or physically disabled children, and article 30 on children of ethnic minorities or of indigenous origin. The CRC underlines that these children have special needs and are entitled to extra support to enable them to enjoy their rights.

~ *The basic freedoms* ~

Several articles on fundamental freedoms from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (articles 12 - 17) were included in the CRC. They are not included in the UN Child rights Declaration of 1959, nor in the first proposal drawn up by Poland. **By recognising, in several articles, the rights of the child to freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, freedom of religion, freedom of association and the right to privacy, it is emphasised that the child is an individual with her/his own identity, that the child is the subject in her/his own life and not, in the first place, an object for care and protection.** This was not uncontroversial and has also led to reservations from states which, for example, want to safeguard the rights of parents and the state to decide on and control the development of the children.

~ *Civil and Political Rights* ~

The CRC does not contain any stipulations corresponding to article 25 in the CCPR on universal and equal suffrage and the right to participate in the government of the country. Instead the CRC has article 12 which assures to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right *"to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child"* and article 3 which enjoins adults who, through their decisions, affect the lives of children to let the "best interests of the child" be a primary consideration in their actions.

In addition to the article on freedom of information, which is the same as in the CCPR, the CRC contains a special article on the role and responsibility of the media to *"ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health"*.¹¹ At the same time emphasis is placed on the responsibility of the state to protect the child against information and material injurious to her/his well-being, bearing in mind the freedom of speech and information.

The CRC, as the CCPR, stipulates that every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults. Neither the CCPR nor the CRC permits any exceptions to the prohibition of the death penalty in respect of persons under 18 years. The observance of these provisions is poor and on this point many countries have made reservations against both the CCPR and the CRC. Attitudes towards and treatment of children who have committed crimes or who live on the fringes of society are often cruel and lack support in the legislation.

~ *Social, economic and cultural rights* ~

At the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, the importance and necessity of defending and applying the social, economic and cultural rights were underlined. They are indispensable components of the work for human rights. The right to a tolerable standard of living, to the highest attainable standard

of health, and education have been recognised and laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the CESC, and in the CRC. The conference stressed that there are strong links between human rights, democracy and development. In the CESC, as in the CRC, the States Parties undertake to realise all the rights enshrined in the covenant by utilising their available resources to the full and, in the CRC, “to the maximum extent of their available resources”. Both conventions stress the role of international cooperation for the implementation of the rights. In several articles the CRC points out the special needs of developing countries. A great challenge for both rich and poor countries is to develop rules and structures which enable people to enjoy their economic, social and cultural rights, recognised in international law, as costs are increasing and the resources of the state declining.

~ *Special protection* ~

The CRC is more detailed and comprehensive than other conventions where the rights to protection against abuse and exploitation are concerned. Here the commitment of the States Parties is far-reaching. Articles 19, 33 – 37 use the expressions “States Parties shall” and “States Parties undertake” as opposed to the usual wording “recognise the right of the child to”, without specifying where the responsibility lies. Articles 33 – 37 take up protection against the use of narcotic drugs, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, abduction, sale, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and “all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child’s welfare”.

~ *The unborn child* ~

The definition of the child raised the question of the rights of the unborn child and thereby the issue of abortion, an area in which it was impossible to achieve unanimity. The compromise reached was to express in the definition in article 1 that a child means every human being below the age of 18 and to include in the preamble the words “*the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth*” from the Declaration of the Rights of

the Child. The article on health care underlines the right to good pre-natal and post-natal care as well as the right to information on family planning. It is then up to each state to decide on the right to abortion.

~ *Children and armed conflicts* ~

Another area in which it was difficult to reach agreement was “children and war”. Article 38 in the CRC refers to international humanitarian law and lays down the responsibility of all states to “take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict”. Article 38 also brings up the issue of the lowest age for participation in armed conflicts. Many countries opposed the idea of letting the 18-year limit also apply to mobilisation by referring, among other things, to their military training institutions which accept younger students. Today the CRC accepts mobilisation of persons over 15 years but older children shall be recruited in the first place. After the extensive UN study on children and war¹² which presented its final report in 1996, work has been taking place to raise the age to 18 years in a supplementary protocol.

~ *No exemption clause* ~

As opposed to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the CRC does not contain an exemption clause giving states the right to disregard some of their obligations in situations of general emergency. The CRC applies in its entirety to all situations, including times of war.

~ *Reservations* ~

Article 51 in the CRC regulates the right of states to make reservations against parts of the CRC. Reservations which are incompatible with the object and purpose of the CRC are not permitted. Almost all states have ratified the CRC but some 30 per cent have made one or more reservations (just over half of these are Western countries). A group of countries, mainly Muslim, but also several others, have made reservations referring to traditions and culture, Islamic law (sharia), the Koran or their constitutions. Issues taken up in the reservations are mainly the role of parents, of adoption, and of freedom of



opinion, expression, religion, association and information. Other articles which have led to reservations are those referring to citizenship, torture and the death penalty, protection in armed conflicts, and legal procedures.

2.3 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

The UN's work on human rights is linked to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with the Commission on Human Rights. This is the forum of the member states for follow-up, policy creation and decision-making. The day-to-day work is coordinated by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at the Human Rights Office in Geneva, which is part of the UN Secretariat.

There are monitoring committees for the six main conventions on human rights (CCPR, CESC, CEDAW, CRC, the Convention against Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture). These committees meet regularly to monitor the observance of the conventions. Appointments to the committees are made by the UN General Assembly. They report regularly to the Commission on Human Rights which, in turn, makes comprehensive reports for the General Assembly via ECOSOC.

~ The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child ~

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child consists of 10 persons who are elected in a personal capacity on the basis of their expertise and integrity and their commitment to the issue. They only represent themselves, but are elected to ensure that different regions, cultures and qualifications are present in the Committee. Thomas Hammarberg (1991 – 1996) and Lisbeth Palme (1997 – 1998) have been members of the Committee.

The Committee meets in Geneva three times a year to examine reports and to hold meetings with invited representatives of countries. The Committee has been extremely active and has developed constructive working methods including directives to the states on the structure and content of their reports.

Good relations have also been developed with relevant non-governmental organisations. As the CRC was ratified by many states in such a short time, the number of reports is large and the resources of the committee inadequate. If the reports become too old they may no longer be relevant and countries lose their motivation to participate in the process. Initiatives have been taken to strengthen the secretariat and to expand the Committee to 18 members.

~ The reporting process ~

A state which has ratified the CRC shall submit its first report two years after accession and then every fifth year. The report shall give an account of the situation for children in the country and the actions taken to implement the articles of the CRC. In addition to the reports submitted by states, the Committee encourages others, for example NGOs, to present supplementary reports. On the basis of the material received, the Committee poses questions to the reporting country which is also invited to the meeting in Geneva for a constructive dialogue on selected issues and possible interventions. These meetings are open and representatives of UN agencies and NGOs are welcome to participate. The Committee then writes a report containing its analysis and recommendations. Every country is liable to make public both its own report and the Committee's response. These reports can be used as a basis for the planning and implementation of programmes to improve the situation of children. The reports are also available on the web site of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights.¹³

~ Theme days ~

In addition to examining reports, the Committee regularly arranges theme days on important issues emerging from the CRC and the country reports received. Research workers and children's organisations are invited to these theme days to present their experience and studies which, together with discussions during the meeting, contribute to the development of a common approach and interpretation of the CRC. The Committee has, for example, arranged theme days on children and war, girls, children and HIV/AIDS, and children with disabilities.

2.4 Other children's rights organisations

~ UNICEF ~

UNICEF,¹⁴ the UN organisation for children, has a special responsibility for the implementation of the CRC and has contributed actively to the extensive accession. UNICEF bases all its planning on the CRC and supports countries in drawing up plans for its implementation. The guiding principles are universality and indivisibility of human rights. As a basis for planning UNICEF regularly makes situation analyses on the conditions of women and children in its partner countries.

In its reports and recommendations the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child often refers to UNICEF for both technical and financial support when countries have problems in implementation.

As a guide for its work with child rights, UNICEF has produced a handbook which goes through every article in the CRC, discusses its origins and the interpretations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.¹⁵

~ Other UN bodies ~

Other parts of the UN system also play an important role in the work of implementing the rights of girls and boys. The follow-up and implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child affect various parts of the UN system, for example UNESCO and UNDP. The theme and country rapporteurs appointed by the UN Commission on Human Rights are often responsible for issues/areas in which the rights of girls and boys are important, but often overlooked, components.¹⁶

~ NGO Group on CRC ~

In Geneva there is also a network for NGOs working with child rights issues. It coordinates the supplementary reports made by NGOs and assists those which want to send representatives to participate in the committee's discussions. They have an information network, the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN),¹⁷ which collects information on children and child rights from all over the world.

~ National child rights organisations ~

In many countries government agencies or national committees have been formed with the implementation of the CRC as their main mandate. This also includes responsibility for writing the reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. In addition there are coalitions (networks) of NGOs working for child rights. They meet especially for working on the supplementary reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Sometimes they also collaborate with the government on the production of the national report. These networks play an important role in monitoring the implementation by governments of the CRC. Many of the NGOs also have projects in the social sectors or provide legal aid for children, to ensure that their rights are met.

~ International Save the Children Alliance ~

The International Save the Children Alliance is developing into a movement for child rights where lobbying at international and local level is a priority and practical support programmes have a child rights profile. An important part of its work is to provide support to local and regional NGOs for child rights activities.

A large number of Swedish, international and local NGOs are working to strengthen child rights and to implement the CRC.

3. *The child in the development of society*



The situation of children is an important indicator of how society is developing and managing its resources.¹⁸ The lives and development of children cannot be separated from the development of society in general. Their survival and development are closely associated with the situation and capacity of their parents as well as with the social, economic and political situation in the country. Attitudes towards children and the way they are treated reflect the values of society.

~ Children as indicators ~

Infant mortality and levels of malnutrition are often cited as indicators of the situation for children. The situation of disabled children, the number of street children, the school drop-out rate and teenage suicides are other important signals of inadequate resources and a lack of respect for child rights. The great changes in the economic policies in eastern Europe during the 1990s have had serious consequences for children. This is demonstrated for example by the increasing number of children in institutions and on the street. The acute economic crisis in Asia in 1998 forced many children to look for work to support their families, for example when their parents lost their income.

~ Poverty ~

Children have sometimes been called the lower class of the poor. This is true in most cultures and societies. They bear the consequences of the poverty of their parents and their society. The lack of resources, education and security increase the risk of violations and unjust treatment. This is true, especially for children of the poor who do not have even their most basic rights met. When resources are not sufficient

for food or schooling, the right to survival and development is denied. For families living under the poverty line, when every day is a struggle for survival, there is neither time nor energy to support and nurture the children. The risk of exploitation, maltreatment and sexual abuse increases. Many children who see the powerlessness of their parents or are exploited and mistreated at home, prefer to try to manage on their own. They leave home in the hope of finding a way to earn their own living. Their prospects of succeeding in life and creating a better situation than that of their parents are not great. Instead they risk ending up in prostitution, drug abuse, violence and criminality.

The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1996 focused in particular on the rights of the poor to development and survival. Economic policies and the opportunities available to poor countries were important issues, as were the risks associated with extreme poverty and social exclusion. In the action plan from the conference the participating countries undertook to *guarantee that, when structural adjustment programmes have been agreed, they contain objectives for social development, in particular the elimination of poverty, the promotion of full and productive employment and improvement of social integration.*¹⁹

~ Equality ~

The right to life, survival and development and the right to non-discrimination are among the fundamental principles of the CRC. The prohibition of discrimination is further reinforced in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Discrimination occurs more often and much more systematically against girls than boys. The desire to have sons, or at least one son, is very strong in most cultures. The continued existence of the family, cult ceremonies to respect the ancestors and the provision of care in old age are usually associated with the oldest son (for example in China), while the girls are given responsibilities in their husbands' families after marriage. With the small family as the norm (imposed or voluntary), it becomes important to give birth to boys, preferably more than one in order to provide for old age. With modern foetal diagnosis it is possibly to

determine the sex of the foetus which, in several places, has led to selective abortion of girls – discrimination begins already before birth. This discrimination continues during childhood. It is demonstrated by the higher rates of malnutrition, disease and deaths for girls than boys, particularly in Asia, as well as in less schooling. Many girls are married off in their early teens and become pregnant long before they are physically and mentally mature to become parents. Genital mutilation of women is still practised in many places and has serious consequences for the health, well-being and survival of girls. Legislation regulating marriage, inheritance and ownership of property often discriminates against girls/women.

~ HIV/AIDS ~

The HIV/AIDS epidemic will have serious consequences for community development in large parts of the world and which affects the situation of the children. In many African countries up to 40% of the population between 20 and 40 years are infected and trends indicate that a similar situation is to be expected in Asia. When this has an impact on mortality rates, at the same time as the older generation dies, life expectancy will decrease drastically, perhaps by as much as 25 years. This means a considerable reduction in the labour force and a decline in production with negative consequences for the national economy. It also means that a large proportion of the child population will lose their parents and other relatives and that, at the same time, other groups supporting the children (teachers, nurses, social workers etc) will also diminish.

~ The Rights of the Child ~

The CRC recognises the rights of children to care and education and places the responsibility in the first place on the family. The responsibility of the States Parties is to assist parents and to make it possible for the family to fulfil its responsibility. At the same time the CRC underlines the rights of the child to participate and to exert an influence. Children are important actors in society and their contribution to their own survival and that of their families is, in many societies, considerable.

4. *The Rights of the Child in international development cooperation*



The overall objective of Swedish international development cooperation is to improve the standard of living of poor people. Combating poverty was one of the strongest driving forces behind Swedish development cooperation from the very beginning.²⁰ The Swedish parliament has laid down six goals for development cooperation:

- ~ **Economic growth** – to contribute to increasing the production of goods and services
- ~ **Economic and social equality** – to help reduce the differences between rich and poor and to ensure that everyone's basic needs are met
- ~ **Economic and political independence** – to enable countries to make their own decisions on their economy and other policies
- ~ **Democratic development** – to contribute to ensuring that people are given greater opportunities to influence development at local, regional and national levels
- ~ **Environmental quality** – to contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment
- ~ **Gender equality** – to promote equality between women and men.²¹

In 1997 and 1998 Sida drew up four action programmes based on the goals of development cooperation. The action programmes take up the subjects of peace, democracy and human rights, poverty, the environment and sustainable development, and gender equality. The rights of the child and the implications of a children's perspective on development cooperation have not been given particular

attention in the action programmes. However, the four subject areas are of great importance for the lives of children, and the situation of children is often a good indicator of the state of society. Children, both girls and boys, are important participants in development cooperation which affects them both positively and negatively.

In this chapter the various areas of Sida's work are described from the perspective of the situation and rights of children. Certain sectors have an obvious responsibility for improving the conditions of children and for ensuring that their situation and rights are included in planning and implementation. For other sectors it is neither natural to see children as interested parties in the programmes nor to analyse the impact from the perspective of their effects on children. Proposals and guidelines are provided below for the integration of child rights into programmes of international development cooperation.

4.1 Human rights and democracy

The CRC is the human rights convention which Sweden has in common with all its partner countries. It thus constitutes an excellent common platform for human rights work. Working for children's rights is not as controversial as taking an active interest in the rights of adults, an interest which is often associated with issues such as imprisonment, press censorship etc. With the norms contained in the CRC as the point of departure, a dialogue can be conducted on the human rights of everyone, on the ratification of other conventions, on the retraction of reservations, and on changes needed for states to live up to their commitments.

In Sida's action programme for peace, human rights and democracy,²² the promotion and defence of the rights of women, children and the disabled are mentioned as areas of strategic significance. **The basic principle is the respect for each and everyone as an individual and as the subject of her or his own life. This applies just as much to children as to adults. Children have the right to a tolerable standard of living, to participation, freedom of speech and freedom**

of religion as worthy citizens, not because they are particularly vulnerable. Moreover children, since they are children and thereby dependent on adults, have the right to special support and protection from the state. This necessitates changes in attitudes and an awareness of how our understanding of childhood affects our thoughts and actions.

In Sida's work with human rights and democracy child rights is an important component. Children and young people (under 18 years) constitute a large proportion of the population in most of Sweden's partner countries.

~ The right to an identity ~

The right to an identity, to registration of birth, to a name and a nationality is essential for the enjoyment of other rights. Without identity papers it is difficult to assert other rights. **Civil and political rights, as well as social, economic and cultural rights are associated with the individual.** A system for the registration of births is a necessity in modern society with its high levels of mobility, where people move and live among people who are not aware of their origins. Identity papers are usually required for access to schools, medical services and social insurance. They are also required for participation in elections or for obtaining a passport. Many children are not registered when they are born and thus lack identity papers. They may belong to marginalised groups, for example minorities or refugees, and, in certain countries, being born out of wedlock means being denied civil rights. Development of legislation and administrative routines to ensure that all children have a name and a nationality, registration and identity papers should be a priority area for development cooperation which focuses on human rights.²³

~ The right to participate and to exert an influence ~

The Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognises the right of each and everyone to participate directly, or through free general and secret elections, in the government of the country. No age limit is given but national legislation in all countries stipulates a lower age limit on the right to vote. The CRC does not mention the right to vote, but defines a

person under 18 years of age as a child unless, under the legislation of the state, majority is attained earlier.

Instead of the right to vote, the States Parties shall ensure that children, who are capable of forming their own opinions, have the right to express them and to have them respected in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. **The basic freedoms: freedom of speech, association, information, thought and religion can be found in the CRC. Together these articles state the view of the human rights conventions on the individual/the child as a full citizen with the right to exert an influence on her/his life and development.** To implement the CRC attitudes to children and to their capabilities have to change. Models for the participation of children in all issues concerning them need to be developed and supported in development cooperation. If children and young people are respected and learn to participate and accept responsibility on the basis of tolerance and respect for others, the prospects for development and peaceful coexistence will grow.

~ Education in human rights ~ and children's rights

Knowledge and understanding are essential for active and meaningful participation in the decision-making process. Education is therefore a cornerstone of all democratisation. Education in democracy and human rights for children and young people shall be part of the cooperation for human rights/democracy. Support to enable children to form their own organisations, and training in how to run them, are other important areas.²⁴ The CRC enjoins adult society to give priority to the best interests of the child in all actions affecting children. Education in the CRC and the responsibilities imposed upon politicians and civil servants through the ratification of the CRC, shall be part of the support for the rights of the child.

~ The legal rights of children ~

The right of each and everyone to objective and just treatment in the legal system is a fundamental principle of democracy. Article 40 of the CRC recognises this right for every child in conflict with the law and specifies in detail the measures the States Parties shall take to guarantee the rights of the child. Article 40 begins by

underlining the importance of treating children in a manner *“consistent with the promotion of the child’s sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child’s respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child’s age and the desirability of promoting the child’s reintegration and the child’s assuming a constructive role in society.”* This, together with the Article’s section 4, specifies the approach States Parties have undertaken to follow when drawing up policies and methods for dealing with children in conflict with the law.

In most partner countries reality is different. Children in conflict with justice lack, as many adults, legal protection. The opinion that children are ignorant and undisciplined as well as the negative attitude to those not following established standards of behaviour, contribute to the abuse of children and the violation of their rights. Often there is a lack of legislation, practical directives and administrative routines regulating when and how children shall be taken into custody. The risk of abuse and exploitation is considerable, especially for girls. The police and the legal authorities lack knowledge and understanding of children and their actions. Rules and structures have been developed based on the attitudes towards and experience of adult male criminals.

In order to strengthen the legal rights of children, programmes should be developed and supported for:

- ~ review and revision of legislation and legal usage*
- ~ educational programmes on children and the rights of children for all persons involved in the administration of justice*
- ~ development of special courts for young people as well as special prisons and other suitable forms of punishment and treatment.*

~ Follow-up process ~

The observance of the CRC by the States Parties and the structure for follow-up and international cooperation is important to ensure that the situation of children is improved and their rights respected. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF have the responsibility, together with the States Parties, for the implementation of the CRC.

The basis of this work is the production of the state’s reports to the Committee. **This process gives**



each country a reason to make an in-depth description and analysis of the situation of children and to discuss necessary changes in legislation and public administration. This is an extensive task for many partner countries since information is often lacking, deficient or unreliable. For many countries the collection of data and the writing of the report lead to new, and sometimes less welcome insights into the situation of children. This process and the discussions with the Committee on the Rights of the Child can be used both normatively and operatively in the implementation of the CRC. Most countries/governments wish the best for their children and the follow-up process is therefore an important form of support. Since the reports are made public and are available on the Internet,²⁵ children, child rights groups, parents and others with an active interest in the conditions and development of children have access to important information in their advocacy work.

The reports, together with UNICEF's situation analyses, give important information for the planning and implementation of different activities for child rights, as well as for the development policy dialogue. Since the situation of children is a good indicator of a country's development, economy and administration, the reports also give more general information about the country and about poor and marginalised groups in the population.

To ensure that the follow-up process functions properly, support is needed for:

- ~ the production of reports by the states
- ~ alternative reports from NGOs
- ~ the Committee on the Rights of the Child to extend its capacity to examine reports
- ~ the dissemination of the national reports and the reports of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.



~ *The ombudsman function* ~

In many countries there are children's ombudsmen of one type or another. Their mandates and functions vary. Some function as ombudsmen for individual children in their struggle for their rights, others have a more overall responsibility to monitor and examine how Parliament, government and central and local agencies observe the CRC. In some countries they are responsible for education programmes and information on the CRC to relevant groups of personnel and to the general public, as well as for studies and reports on the situation of children.²⁶

To ensure that the CRC is a living instrument in the work for children, all these different functions are needed. A children's ombudsman with the responsibility to examine the observance of the CRC by the state

and central and local agencies must have a strong and independent position with the possibility and the right to examine activities and to comment on shortcomings. Linking this function to a ministry narrows the perspective and the scope to take action. It easily reduces the possibilities of obtaining an overview and taking comprehensive action. In the UN General Assembly's Resolution 48/134 of 1993, the so-called the Paris principles, there are recommendations on how national institutions on human rights should be organised. UNICEF has drawn up criteria for children's ombudsmen.²⁷ In cooperation with the Swedish Office of the Children's Ombudsman Sida has developed a training programme for politicians and senior civil servants on how the children's ombudsman function can be developed and organised.

Priorities for cooperation and support in a child rights' perspective:

- ~ Changes in attitudes towards girls and boys in accordance with the attitudes and vision of the CRC;
- ~ Changes in attitudes/values to reduce discrimination against children and violations of their rights, as well as discrimination against individual groups of children;
- ~ Education on children and children's rights in the democratic structures;
- ~ Development of systems for the registration of births, for the issuing of identity papers and for the regulation of citizenship;
- ~ Education and training in the rights of the child for the police force and agencies involved in the administration of justice;
- ~ Review and revision of legislation in order to integrate child rights, and a review of systems and routines for taking young offenders into custody;
- ~ The work of the countries with the reporting process, data collection and data processing.

4.2 Public administration

The necessity of good governance is receiving increasing attention in international development cooperation. Support for and development of efficient public administrations is assuming a central position in Sida's activities. The implementation of the CRC requires knowledge of the convention and of children as well as changes to structures and routines in large parts of the public administration. Neither decisions nor administrative routines are neutral where age is concerned. They have been developed by adults for adults and often lack scope for the consideration of children and their needs. The basic principles of the CRC should be fundamental to all local democracy and administration. **The rights of children to form an opinion, to express it, and to have it respected is of special importance in the immediate environment of the child as is the undertaking in the CRC that all decisions shall give priority to the best interests of the child and promote their rights to the maximum extent of available resources.**²⁸ Giving priority to the implementation of the CRC in the

immediate environment of the child lays the foundation for democratic development.

~ Statistics ~

Statistics are important to build up knowledge prior to planning and making decisions. Available statistics are seldom broken down on the basis of age, except for demographic data. In most other statistics children are included under the generic term "household". Where children specifically are concerned, there are health statistics up to the age of five (mortality, morbidity, malnutrition, vaccination status etc), but they are seldom broken down by gender. There are no health statistics for older children. Instead there are school statistics on enrolment, drop-out, examinations etc. Little information is available on children who have not started school or who leave school. For their reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child as well as for their planning, most countries need to develop their processing, analysis and presentation of statistical material in order to include the child perspective. Statistics should be broken down by sex and age at suitable intervals. Methods need to be developed to include and to make visible groups of children in special situations and with special needs.

~ Central and local administration ~

By ratifying the CRC the states have undertaken to follow the basic principles on non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development, and the right to participation. **The best interests of the child shall provide guidance in all decisions concerning children and all suitable legislative, administrative and other measures shall be taken to implement the CRC to the maximum extent of the states' available resources. All children are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity, to have their rights met, and to participate in decisions affecting them.** This places far-reaching demands on the public administration at both central and local level. It includes the division of responsibility between local and central decision-makers and administrations, the role of the public and the private sector, financing models (taxes or fees), and the division of powers. From a child rights perspective it is importance to make the situation, and needs of

children, visible and to take this into consideration in the choice of policy.

The question of the “best interests of the child”²⁹ cannot be answered unambiguously and conclusively – it is dependent on culture, time, geography, knowledge and the social situation of the child. The situation for children differs. A child may be a single child or have many brothers and sisters, it may be a boy or a girl and live in Sweden or Laos. Knowledge of what is good for children is being developed and changing with new research. Decision-makers need to analyse the situation of the child/children and the consequences of proposed actions in order to reach a decision on what appears to be best for the child in view of current knowledge and values. An important part of this analysis is the knowledge and opinions expressed by the child. For local administrations, methods need to be developed on how to take in the views of children and how to analyse and assess the consequences of different proposals, i.e. to make child impact assessments.³⁰

Most often the local administration has much stronger links to the central administration than to other local administrations. This makes it difficult to work across sectors which is often necessary to change the situation of children. Children who, for example, have lost their parents due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic need support from many sectors, as do children who are disabled. Often they end up with one agency lacking the expertise and the mandate to provide for a large part of the child’s needs. Strong local coordination and more opportunities for collaboration and sharing of available resources need to be developed for the benefit of the children.

To ensure that a country is able to live up to its commitments under the Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights and the CRC, resources are required for the provision of public services. In the human rights conventions the states undertake to ensure that all children have access to free, compulsory primary education and to public health and medical services in order to enjoy the highest

attainable standard of health. The state shall also ensure that children have a tolerable standard of living and social insurance in one form or another.³¹ In addition there are special requirements for the care of refugee children and disabled children.³² An efficient tax system is essential to strengthen the state’s finances and to create the scope for the activities required.

At the same time it is important that the family has the possibility to care for the child and that other forms of financing and services are developed. To review budget allocations and monitor how child rights are met, some countries make a supplement to the national budget where the various items are analysed from a child perspective.

Priorities for cooperation and support in a child rights’ perspective:

- ~ *Training of local politicians and decision-makers in children and child rights;*
- ~ *Training and methods development to increase the opportunities for children to participate in the planning and decision-making processes affecting their lives;*
- ~ *Development of systems and structures necessary for the state to fulfil its commitments towards children in accordance with the CRC (Article 4);*
- ~ *Impact analyses of planning and budgeting based on the fundamental principles of the CRC;*
- ~ *Collection, analysis and presentation of statistics broken down by sex and age.*

4.3 The health sector

The CRC recognises the right of every child to the highest attainable standard of health. The States Parties shall ensure that all children have access to health care and rehabilitation; they shall also ensure that no child is deprived of this right. Articles with special relevance for the health sector are articles 23, 24 and 39 in the CRC. The four basic principles in the CRC should give guidance in the planning and evaluation of all activities.

~ *Maternity care and child care* ~

The development of maternal and child health services has been given priority in Swedish bilateral cooperation in many countries, as well as in multilateral cooperation. Child survival is one of the sub-goals in the declaration from the World Summit of 1990. Antenatal and maternity care in order to give the infant the best possible start in life, vaccination programmes and health care services for children under five, and health information, especially about breast-feeding and nutrition are essential. Maternal and child health services shall be available to all regardless of background, age, social situation or the like. The services shall show respect and tolerance for social, ethnic and cultural differences.³³ Financial resources shall be guaranteed to ensure that all have access to the services they need.

~ *The health of teenagers* ~

The health of teenagers, with a special focus on life skills, is another important area. The spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases among young people and the high mortality rates from teenage pregnancies and abortions show that the teens, just as the child's first few years, are a period with considerable health risks. For teenagers it is a question of access to relevant information and contraceptives, of attitudes towards girls and towards sex, and of access to medical care and treatment in connection with infections, pregnancies and abortions.

~ *Infectious diseases
and accidents* ~

Infectious diseases and accidents affect children of all ages, even if the highest mortality rates are to be found in the younger ages. Major tropical diseases such as bilharzia and guinea worm cause ill health for many children of school age. Among children living in slum areas and on the street tuberculosis is a problem. Many children are continuously exposed to the risk of accidents, particularly in connection with different types of work, for example when looking after cattle, fetching water, cooking and selling goods

on the street. Violence and abuse are also a major cause of both acute and chronic health problems among children.

~ *HIV/AIDS* ~

The spread of HIV/AIDS will affect health and medical services as well as all other sectors globally for a long time to come. Children are in the minority among those infected and sick, but their lives are affected drastically when parents and other adults in their environment are infected. The spread of the infection to children occurs mainly in two age groups: unborn/newly born babies and sexually active teenagers. In addition there is a certain spread via infected blood and unsterilised instruments to other age groups.³⁴

The vertical infection from mother to child is given attention and interventions developed to prevent the unborn/new-born baby from being infected. Pregnant women are offered tests and information on their HIV status, counselling on how to avoid becoming infected if they are HIV negative, and care and counselling if they are HIV positive. The risk of infection via breast milk can be avoided by the use of baby milk powder. However, the risk of using baby milk powder is considerable if the hygienic and financial situation is inadequate. New findings also show that the risk of infection via breast milk can be minimised if breast feeding is used exclusively.

To reduce the risk that the infection is spread to, and between, young people there is a need for both greater knowledge and new attitudes for a change in sexual behaviour. It is a question of knowledge about and attitudes towards safe sex among girls and boys. HIV statistics from southern Africa show that the spread of HIV is much greater among teenage girls than teenage boys which indicates that girls are often infected by older men, who exploit them in various ways. Sexual services are, for many girls, the compensation they can offer for education opportunities, clothes, protection etc. Changes in attitudes and legislation to protect teenage girls from sexual exploitation are an important part in HIV prevention. (See also below, chap 5.6.)



~ Health reforms ~

Health service administration and training of health personnel are components of Swedish development cooperation with many countries. It includes health care financing, the role of the private sector, decentralisation, organisation, and the basic and further training of health personnel. To fulfil the commitments of the CRC and to meet the rights of all children to basic health care, the needs of the older children (6-18 years) must also be made visible and included in the planning and organisation of health services. This also applies to the handling of drugs.

~ Tobacco and drug abuse ~

There is a considerable variation in legislation and standards relating to the use of addictive substances by children while, at the same time, there is broad consensus on their serious health consequences. While the western world is introducing increasingly stricter rules on the marketing of tobacco in order to protect young people, the use of cigarettes is growing among children in most partner countries. There is no regulation of marketing and sales; in fact many children earn their living by selling cigarettes and matches. The use of hard drugs is increasing, particularly in two groups: children who live on the streets and, for example, earn a living from prostitution, and older school children. In the CRC the States Parties undertake to take all appropriate measures to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and to prevent the use of children in the production and trafficking of drugs.³⁵ International cooperation is essential in order to stop drug abuse and to protect children.

~ Physical and psycho-social rehabilitation

The right of children to rehabilitation is emphasised in two articles in the CRC,³⁶ two articles which have no parallel in other human rights conventions and which give children the right to support and assistance in cases of disability and psycho-social ill health after distressing experiences and abuse. For

the health sector it includes treatment, care and rehabilitation of children with physical disabilities, and psychiatry and psycho-social rehabilitation for children with mental ill-health. In the field of psycho-social ill-health there is a need to develop models of treatment which are socially and culturally relevant and financially feasible. The children in question are those affected by wars and armed conflicts and those who have been exposed to other serious violations such as child prostitution, in other words large groups of children in most of Sida's partner countries. If these children are not given help to process their experiences, their ability to cope with daily life and school as well as emotional tensions later in life will be affected.

The highest attainable standard of health is about much more than access to health care. It involves the traffic and home environment, the prevention of accidents, access to nutritious food, pollution from industry and agriculture, occupational health and the working environment. These are all areas requiring cooperation across sector boundaries at Sida and in the partner countries.

Priorities for cooperation and support in a child rights' perspective

- ~ Support to maternal and child health care, and contraceptives available to all;
- ~ Information on nutrition, hygiene and accident prevention;
- ~ Programmes for the sexual and reproductive health of teenagers;
- ~ Health care for older children;
- ~ Information and international cooperation to reduce the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs;
- ~ Rehabilitation of children with disabilities and children suffering from psycho-social ill-health;
- ~ Cooperation across sector boundaries for accident prevention, access to food, and environmental issues.

4.4 Education

The CRC recognises the right of all children to education. In articles 28 and 29, it shows how this shall be implemented and describes the purpose of education. Education is a right in itself, not just a means to achieve other goals. A child rights' perspective on education has consequences for legislation, funding, curriculum development etc. Basic education is the right the States Parties have undertaken to make compulsory and available, free of charge, to all children. A child rights' perspective shall also permeate the work in the schools and knowledge of child rights be included in the curriculum. The number of children attending school has increased in all countries during recent decades but there are still over 130 million children of primary school age whose right to education is not provided for.

Support to the education sector is a cornerstone of Swedish international development cooperation. It is the sector which most specifically focuses on children. Sida's support is allocated in particular to primary education, educational reforms, improving the quality of teaching, and to neglected groups. It includes basic education for all, access to classrooms and teachers, production of text books and other teaching aids, curriculum development and teaching methods. The challenge now is to introduce a child rights' perspective in the support to the education sector, so that the right to respect, integrity and participation permeates Sida's work. At the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990, it was agreed that education is a right in itself and, at the same time, a decisive instrument for combating poverty, for democratic development and for strengthening respect for human rights, particularly those of women and children.³⁷

~ Free basic education ~

The CRC, as well as the Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, clearly emphasises the importance of education. States Parties shall guarantee "to the maximum extent of their available resources" that all children have access to free basic education, which shall also be compulsory, in order to guarantee that all are really given access.³⁸

The prohibition of discrimination emphasises that all children shall have the right to education. Post primary education shall be made available to all according to ability and interest. Vocational guidance and student counselling shall be developed. Breaks and drop-out are a great problem in many developing countries and the CRC requires special measures to prevent this. To guarantee education for all, rules for admission and total costs must be reviewed. There are often rules and routines relating to admissions which exclude certain students and groups, for example the requirement of identity papers, language skills or ethnic/social affiliation. Disabled children are often not admitted since they may require extra resources and the adaptation of classrooms and teaching methods. Distances to school can be so great that it is impossible for small children to attend school, the road may be considered too dangerous or unsuitable for girls. Many children (and their parents) also find the school meaningless and irrelevant and therefore choose not to attend.

Financial factors and attitudes are the main factors which exclude children from school. Even where the school is formally free of charge, there are many more or less hidden expenses. These can include the cost of school uniforms, textbooks and school materials, school food, contributions to teachers' salaries, school repairs etc. With the older children, there is also the loss of income earned if they had worked instead.

The comprehensive financial reforms of the 1980s and 1990s have resulted, among other things, in reductions in public expenditure. This has led to cut-backs in the education sector, to reductions in teachers' salaries and in the budgets for text books. This and a greater degree of privatisation, has led to growing inequality within and between countries.³⁹

~ The content of education ~

Girls and boys are entitled to an education which has the aim of developing their full potential where personality, talents and mental and physical abilities are concerned. Teaching must be based on the various needs and resources of the students and be adapted to the needs and the reality of the child. This often requires new teaching methods and new content.

Education shall also prepare the child for a responsible life by developing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and improving understanding and tolerance of people who are different. Curricula, teaching aids and teacher training must be developed and changed in order to develop a school which is in the spirit of the CRC, i.e. a school which promotes learning, puts the child in focus, and provides a meaningful education.

Children who have access to relevant schooling which prepares them for the future are given the possibility to improve and change their situation. Poor children with no chance of obtaining an education remain poor and have few opportunities for self-development. In most countries there is a long way to go before the right to relevant education is a reality for all children, and particularly for girls. Girls must often leave school earlier than boys for reasons of cost (the family can only afford to send one child to school), for practical reasons (girls shall be married off, they are needed at home or they are not allowed to leave home alone) or the attitude of the school/parents that girls do not need to go to school or cannot profit from education. Pregnancy generally obliges girls to leave school without any possibility of returning. Special efforts are necessary to change attitudes and to make further education possible.

~ Democracy in the school ~

The principle of the right of the child to express an opinion and to have it respected is of great relevance for the school and its work. The school has the responsibility for providing education in and about democracy and human rights.⁴⁰ It involves both theoretical knowledge and practical experience. A school permeated by a democratic culture with active student participation, develops a democratic attitude in the students providing a good platform for the future. For students to learn to be tolerant of differences and to show respect for each other, they need to be treated with respect by adults both in and outside school. When the CRC speaks of children in conflict with the law and their rights, it is emphasised that children have the right *“to be treated in a manner consistent with the*

*promotion of the child’s sense of dignity and worth which reinforces the child’s respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child’s age...”*⁴¹ This applies, to just as great an extent, to all other children and to the attitude of the school.

~ Children with special needs ~

To make education available to all, opportunities must be created for those children who, for different reasons, are otherwise unable to participate in school. At the World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Salamanca in 1994, it was agreed that the basic principle should be an inclusive school which, as far as possible, admits all children.

Children with special needs shall, as the first option, be integrated in the regular school and teachers be given the training and guidance necessary to take on this responsibility.⁴²

For many children the regular school is not a real possibility. This can be the case for children who must work for their living part of the day and need to have their lessons in the late afternoons and evenings; teenage girls who have been expelled from school on account of pregnancy; children with disabilities which make it difficult to integrate them; and children in nomadic communities. **Alternatives need to be developed within the framework of the regular school system to give these children access to education. This education shall have the same objectives as the regular school and transition to the regular school must be available for as many as possible.** While segregation and discrimination shall be avoided, children have the right to the education which suits them best and which their parents choose. The state has no right to prevent alternative forms of schooling as long as the principles stated in the CRC are observed.

For children with distressing experiences or children in war, the school provides security, contributes to creating routines and gives a certain degree of normalcy in life, thereby supporting the healing process. The psycho-social function can thus be as important as the pedagogical.

~ *Discipline at school* ~

Corporal punishment in various forms, as well as other humiliating and degrading treatment, occurs in schools all over the world and is the reason given by many students for truancy and drop-out. The attitude towards children, towards teaching and learning is shown in the ways discipline is maintained in schools. In the CRC States Parties undertake to “take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity and in conformity with the CRC”. **Children have the right to be treated with respect in a way that does not insult them even when they have misbehaved. This calls for a change in attitude among teachers and in society in general. Sweden, like the Committee on the Rights of the Child, does not accept corporal punishment in schools.**

Priorities for cooperation and support in a child rights’ perspective:

- ~ Extending the education system so that all children have free and compulsory access to primary education and access to further education;
- ~ Development of curricula, textbooks and teaching methods in order to integrate the intentions of the CRC in school education;
- ~ Education in human rights and development of a democratic culture in the school;
- ~ Teacher training based on the demands the CRC imposes on teaching and education;
- ~ Alternative education programmes in the regular school for children who, for various reasons, have difficulties to participate;
- ~ Efforts to integrate, wherever possible, disabled children in the school;
- ~ Development of programmes of psycho-social support for children with distressing experiences in cooperation with the health services;
- ~ Promotion of a change in attitude among teachers and parents towards humiliating disciplinary action and of the prohibition of degrading forms of punishment, for example corporal punishment.

4.5 Culture and the media

Culture in various forms reflects the identity of a people or an ethnic group and develops and strengthens the identity of individuals belonging to the group. The different forms of cultural expression can be used to process experience and to develop general patterns of behaviour. In its programmes of cooperation Sida is giving an increasing amount of support to different cultural projects for children.

~ *Cultural and artistic life* ~

The right to participate in cultural and artistic life is recognised in the CRC. Access to literature and the possibility to read undisturbed contributes to the child’s acquisition of reading skills and understanding of language, extends the child’s horizons, and makes greater understanding and tolerance possible. The opportunity to participate in theatrical, musical and artistic activities gives children an opportunity for self-expression and creativity. For many children this provides a way of processing distressing experiences and learning to handle grief and personal loss.

~ *Rest, play and leisure* ~

Article 31 of the CRC takes up the right of the child to rest, play and leisure. The right to rest and leisure is also recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the CESC. This emphasises rest as a fundamental human need and a prerequisite for work. In addition to permitting recuperation, leisure is important since it provides the scope for the development of one’s own interests and talents. **For children, play is an important part of their development and learning process. Children also use play in order to process both positive and negative experiences.**

~ *Ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities* ~

Article 30 emphasises the right of children from ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities to enjoy, together with others in the group, their own culture, to practise their own religion and to use their own language. It is of special importance that children



learn to read and write in their mother tongue in order to enjoy a stable linguistic development.⁴³ This is important for the children to develop confidence in their own identity which is a prerequisite for understanding and respecting the culture of others.

~ Information and the media ~

The media has a strong impact as a creator of attitudes and values in society. In particular children looking for an identity of their own in a changing society, possibly in protest against their parents and traditions, are easily influenced. The CRC takes up, in a special article, the responsibility of the media in relation to the child. The media shall disseminate information of cultural and social value for children, information which promotes their social and moral welfare. Providing information to children on environmental risks and protection should be a responsibility of the media. They should also develop guidelines to protect children from information and

material harmful to them. Regard for the linguistic needs of children from minority groups is given special emphasis.⁴⁴

Children also have the right to integrity in the media. Far too often children are described as problems, as needy and dependent, but without the ability to improve their situation themselves. This reinforces the view of children as the objects for actions and care of adults, without a capacity of their own and without rights and obligations of their own.

Children have the right to receive information in order to participate in the development of society, to understand events and to form opinions on what is happening.⁴⁵ They also have the right to disseminate information and thoughts through various forms of expression, subject only to the restrictions contained in law.



Priorities for cooperation and support in a child rights' perspective:

- ~ *Development of children's libraries, production and dissemination of children's books;*
- ~ *Support for theatrical, musical and artistic activities for and with children, possibly as part of work for peace or psycho-social rehabilitation;*
- ~ *Development of creative leisure and play environments for children;*
- ~ *Training of journalists in children and the CRC, in particular the right of the child to integrity;*
- ~ *Opportunities for children to acquire information and to spread information themselves via the media;*
- ~ *Production in the media of information and material on the CRC;*
- ~ *Information on environmental risks and protection.*

4.6 Rural development

In most developing countries the majority of the people still live in rural areas. They need good conditions for a life in dignity, including social services and the opportunity to earn a livelihood. Rural development has been an important part of Sida's work for many years. The forms of cooperation have changed over the years but the main objective, to create good conditions to enable people living in rural areas to enjoy a dignified life, has remained the same.

~ Social services ~

Children and young people constitute a large part of the population in rural areas. They have the right to primary education, health services, communications and other forms of infrastructure. It is most important that possibilities to earn an income are developed. Girls and boys have traditionally had specific tasks in the family and the community. The girls take

over duties from their mothers at an early age and are trained for the responsibility for home and family, while the boys follow their fathers. With education and increasing contact with the outside world via radio, TV and visitors, values and expectations are changing, particularly among the young. When planning development programmes for rural areas, the experience, needs and wishes of girls and boys should be included in the preparatory studies and in the planning process.

~ New roles and values ~

When contacts with the outside world increase, schooling is available and compulsory, and information on other ways of life is widely spread, traditional patterns tend to break down. The roles and responsibilities of children and adults change and former norms and rules are questioned. Children are important as carriers of new ideas and can contribute to development and change, while at the same time risking exploitation on account of their lack of experience and knowledge.

To make the best use of their curiosity and commitment in development they should be included in the analysis, planning and implementation of projects aiming at change and development. The basic principles contained in the CRC (non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, development and survival, and the right to participation) shall be integrated in all planning and the impact on children made visible and analysed.

~ The work of children ~

The majority of working children are found in rural areas in Africa and Asia.⁴⁶ There they mainly work in traditional sectors and in the households. Their work contributes to supporting their families and is part of their social training and education. Here there are many examples of harmful work and work which exploits children, as well as work which develops and strengthens the independence and self-confidence of the child. The needs and demands of the parents often come into conflict with the requirements for attendance in school and homework.

The CRC does not prohibit children from working but enjoins the States Parties to pro-

tect the child from economic exploitation and from performing any work that can be hazardous to the child's health and development. This shall be done using appropriate legislative, administrative and social measures and information. Also the work shall not interfere with the child's education.⁴⁷

Access to education must be available for those children who have to work to earn a living. For children in rural areas, the training they receive during work is an important part of their preparations to take over the family farm. Further regular schooling is important to enable them to meet new demands and to take advantage of other job opportunities. A good education is becoming increasingly important in modern society. (See also chapter 5.4 below.)

Priorities for cooperation and support in a child rights' perspective:

- ~ Support to enable children to participate in the development of society;*
- ~ Expansion of primary education and vocational education;*
- ~ Expansion of social services and communications;*
- ~ Job opportunities for young people and the regulation of working conditions and wages for workers under 18 years of age.*

4.7 Agriculture, forestry and fisheries

These sectors are still the most important for the economies of many developing countries. Development here is necessary to combat poverty and to create resources to improve the standard of living in rural areas. The traditional family activities and the large companies (plantations, forest companies etc) affect the situation of children in different ways.

~ The role of children ~

In the family unit the children live close to their parents and participate more or less regularly in the work of the family. Many will take over from their parents in the future, even if there is a growing degree of uncertainty and mobility. The roles and responsibilities of women and men are clearly

defined. With age expectations grow that children shall follow the example and be trained in their roles. Their vocational training is mainly what they learn from their parents. However, the education they receive in school is increasingly important as society changes. Where parents are employed by landowners (fishing-boat owners or forest companies) their relationship, and that of their children, to the land is different. They are dependent on the employer whose interests may be totally different to those of the family. For the children the risk of exploitation is great, including unreasonably long working days making education impossible, or bonded labour where the child is forced to pay off the family debts by working. Children account for a great share of the work and they should therefore be included in discussions on development and change, as well as in information and education programmes. Just as it is important to involve both women and men, this also applies to girls and boys. To protect children against exploitation and hazardous work, regulating working conditions and monitoring observance is necessary.

~ Accidents and health risks ~

Working with farming, forestry and fishing involves the risk of accidents and of permanent injuries for the children. Often children are given duties exceeding their strength and capacity which increases the risk of accidents. It can be anything from the seven-year-old who takes the buffalo to the waterhole, falls into the water and drowns, to the 15-year-old forest worker who fells the tree over himself. The long-term risks are associated with occupational injuries caused by poisonous insecticides, heavy lifting and suchlike. The children are as unaware of the risks as often their employers and parents.

The basic principles of the CRC on non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development and the right to participation should direct the planning and implementation of projects for the development of agriculture forestry and fisheries.

Priorities for cooperation and support in a child rights' perspective:

- ~ Support for the visibility and participation of children in the development of society;*
- ~ Expansion of relevant and meaningful primary education and vocational training;*
- ~ Information and actions to protect children from injuries and risks;*
- ~ Job opportunities for young people and the regulation of working conditions and wages for workers under 18 years of age;*
- ~ Environmental impact assessments from a child rights' perspective.*

4.8 Water issues

Water is a vital natural resource and Sida cooperates with many countries in water programmes. Some are projects run in collaboration with many donors and countries in order to improve access to clean water. Others are small programmes for local water management and improved hygiene.

~ Water as a basic resource ~

Water is in short supply in many parts of the world. The greater the importance of water for energy production, industry and agriculture, the greater the potential is for conflict both within and between countries. **The distribution and use of water resources concerns the right of people to survival and livelihood and is thus a question of human rights. Water scarcity and the unregulated use of water mainly affect the poor. They can spend a great part of the day fetching water for drinking and hygiene and have difficulties in asserting their need to irrigate their crops.** Often the water they have access to is of poor quality. In most cultures fetching water is the task of women and therefore also of girls who start training at an early age. The task of fetching water is time-consuming, it is heavy, and requires a great deal of energy. This contributes to the malnourishment of so many women who also bear undernourished chil-

dren. The availability of clean water in large quantities is a relief for many women, it improves the security and prospects of survival of their families.

~ Risk of accidents and health risks ~

For the child water is valuable both for drinking and for play. But there are also risks associated with water. Drowning is a common cause of death among children. Water-borne infections are another great risk. They may be gastric/intestinal infections spread via polluted water, for example in slums or refugee camps, where the sanitary arrangements are poor or non-existent. They cause diarrhoea epidemics which spread rapidly and can be life-threatening, particularly for small children. These mainly occur in areas where people live close together. But they may also be infections borne by insects, where the intermediate host is dependent on water, for example malaria, guinea worm and bilharzia etc. Here the risks are greater in rural areas where it is said that boys are infected by bilharzia when they start playing in the dams and girls by guinea worm when they start carrying water, i.e. about 8-10 years old in both cases.

~ Information and knowledge ~

Both children and parents need better knowledge of the risks associated with water. Knowledge about sanitation and hygiene must be made general just as the understanding of the risks associated with ponds of water, irrigation channels and the like. The basic principles of the CRC on non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development and the right to participation should direct the planning and implementation of water-related projects.

Priorities for development cooperation and support from a children's rights perspective:

- ~ Extension of water and sanitation systems in towns and densely populated areas;*
- ~ Information and education on hygiene and sanitation;*
- ~ Programmes for accident prevention;*
- ~ Methods and models for the sustainable use of water resources.*

4.9 Environmental issues

Swedish international development cooperation shall contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment.⁴⁸ **Children have the right to grow up in an environment which is not harmful to their development and health.**⁴⁹ **They have the right to natural resources both now and in the future. The survival of their own and future generations is dependent on the prudent and economic use of the earth's resources. Children also have a strong commitment to the environment and to all living creatures, both large and small.** They are entitled to information and have the right to express their views and to have them respected in issues affecting their future environment. With their strong commitment children can actively contribute to increasing knowledge and awareness of environmental issues. They are also very willing to participate in practical environmental work. When programmes are assessed for their consequences on the environment, the effects on children and their living conditions should be included.

Through its accession to the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the international environmental conventions, Sweden has undertaken to work for sustainable development and protection of the environment. The action plan from the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 underlines the need for caution with the environment when support for development and growth is being planned and implemented. Hardly anywhere is the common assumption of international responsibility as important as in the environmental sector. Negative effects

on the environment in one country or region can have consequences far outside the borders. Negative effects may also often have consequences in areas totally different from those first involved. The damage may also not have an impact until long after the activity has come to an end. Consequences far ahead in time may be considered by decision-makers today as irrelevant – but for their grandchildren they will be reality. There are countless examples of industrial and development projects where respect for the environment has been lacking.⁵⁰

Protection of the environment and issues relating to sustainable development affects many different areas. The depletion or pollution of water, air, land and forests has far-reaching consequences for the life and survival of mankind. Just as children clearly show symptoms of poverty and inequality in the family and society, the lack of respect for the environment and the depletion of natural resources have serious consequences for children. Damage to the environment can affect the genes, the growing foetus, and the small infants whose bodies are undergoing a process of rapid growth. It can cause infertility, miscarriages, deformities, allergies, intoxications and various types of tumours. Increased ill health among children can be an important indicator of environmental damage.

Priorities for development cooperation and support from a child rights' perspective:

- ~ *Support for the visibility and participation of children in the development of society;*
- ~ *Expansion of relevant and meaningful primary education and vocational training;*
- ~ *Information and actions to protect children from injuries and risks;*
- ~ *Job opportunities for young people and the regulation of working conditions and wages for workers under 18 years of age;*
- ~ *Environmental impact assessments from a child rights' perspective.*

4.10 Urbanisation

The movement into towns and densely populated areas is a reality for an increasing number of children in the Third World. It has been estimated that more than half of the world's population will live in towns in the 21st century. The possibility of obtaining an education, and the availability of work for those with an education, has led to an increasing number of people moving to the towns. The availability of health care is also better in the towns. Many older children (12-18 years) make their way to the urban areas to earn an income which perhaps also makes it possible for them to contribute to the survival of their family at home.

~ Housing and infrastructure ~

The great influx of people to the towns creates considerable demands on housing and infrastructure. Many people end up in the slums on the outskirts or on the streets, possibly in shacks worse than the homes they came from. They succeed in earning a living one way or another, but the margins are minimal and they are dependent on relatives in the village and the people around them. For single children coming to the towns, housing is a problem. If they are lucky they find some friends with whom they can share a rented room, others find a "shelter" run by a voluntary organisation or a church but for many the only alternative is the park or the street. Obtaining privacy is difficult and it is hard to find a safe place to keep possessions and savings. There is a great risk of theft and assault. The housing situation affects the child's sense of security and confidence in those around him. Many environments are characterised by considerable risks of accidents (traffic, dams, construction sites etc) and violence. In their contribution to the Second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul in 1996, children stressed in particular the need of clean water, toilets and electricity, and their fear of violence and the sense of insecurity.⁵¹ A lack of water and sanitation increases the risk of ill health among both small and big children. For the small children it is a question of diarrhoea and skin diseases such as scabies, for the bigger children infections such as tuberculosis.



Teenage girls in particular experience the lack of water, washing facilities and toilets as a great problem.

A good housing environment requires overall planning which includes the use of land for housing, outdoor activities and communications, and the availability of water, sewage disposal and refuse collection. Planning must be based on the needs, experience and points of view of all inhabitants. Public communications should take children's needs of transport into consideration and be designed to minimise the risks of accidents and injuries. Air pollution caused by traffic is a major problem in the growing towns. Just as it is possible to offer, and create the scope for, relationships and a feeling of belonging, it is possible to build for insecurity and segregation.

*~ The street ~
a place for work and leisure*

The streets and parks of the towns are the place for work and leisure of many children. It is an environment with many risks, but also with opportunities for an income, for adventure and comradeship. A large proportion of the children attend school, live together with their families and return home in the evenings, while others sleep in parks or the like. For many there are no alternatives to earning a living on the street while trying to complete schooling in order to find better jobs in the future. Here are children who, with imagination, energy and a great deal of nerve, work hard to obtain money for food, school fees or something else much longed for.

For others the street is the life style they have chosen more or less voluntarily. They are not accepted in school or they have dropped out. Their home and family situation is such that they cannot or do not wish to return. They often have experience of assault and abuse both at home and at school and they lack confidence in adult society. Almost everywhere they live in conflict with the established society which regards and treats them with contempt and disgust. They form gangs in order to protect and support each other. The girls often have to pay for their protection with sexual services. The step to criminality is short. When there are many children and few

opportunities to earn an honest living, thefts, violence and criminality grow. They guard their preserve, come into conflict with other gangs and constitute an ever-increasing safety problem.⁵² The maltreatment and brutality of the police, road users and shopkeepers are part of their everyday life.

~ Children on the street ~

Life on the street involves great risks for the children. The lack of hygiene, the poor quality food and the bad environment with a great deal of air pollution has a negative effect on their health. This, in turn, has a negative impact on their physical, mental and intellectual development. For the children who also sleep on the street or in parks, the risks of abuse and exploitation are particularly great.

Most societies have an extremely negative attitude towards street children who are often accused of vagrancy and disorderly behaviour. When they are too many or when the city needs to be "cleaned up prior to a state visit", they are rounded up and put into prisons, institutions and work camps. They are often imprisoned and mistreated for no other reason than for being on the street and have few possibilities to defend themselves. In extreme cases they can be killed by hired killers or the police. For children the risk of being drawn into drug abuse and prostitution is great, just as the risk of being exploited by older criminals.

In many countries demobilised child soldiers constitute a large group among the children on the street. They have no sense of belonging and cannot, dare not or do not want to return to their families. They bear the memory of distressing experiences and have feelings of guilt for what they have been part of. Without help to process their experiences and to find their way back into the community and the security offered by society, they easily end up in a life of violence and criminality. They often have access to weapons which they have grown accustomed to using to obtain what they want.⁵³

Interventions to give children on the street the possibility to change their lives must be based on their situation, in respect for their experience and the choices they have made. They are often school drop-outs and it may be necessary to develop other forms



of education for them. Imprisonment and isolation from society provide few possibilities for positive development and integration into society.

The CRC recognises the right of all children to a “standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development”. Primarily it is the parents and the extended family who shall ensure that children have a tolerable standard of living making survival and development possible. The state is responsible for providing the conditions needed by parents and for giving them support. This is a responsibility for both central and local authorities in close cooperation with the residents. In the planning and implementation of activities, the basic principles of the CRC on non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development and the right to participation should provide guidance.

Priorities for development cooperation and support from a child rights’ perspective:

- ~ Participation of children in the planning of housing environments and infrastructure;
- ~ Planning of safe and creative outdoor environments for children;
- ~ Development of social services, access to schools and health care;
- ~ Development of public communications also adapted to the needs and situation of children;
- ~ Job opportunities for young people and the regulation of working conditions and wages for workers under the age of 18.

4.11 Infrastructure

This can be seen as an area where the child perspective is not so self-evident. But infrastructure often impacts on the access of children to, for example, health care, education and clean water. Sweden provides extensive support for building up infrastructure in developing countries. Support is provided, for example, for roads, bridges, dams, power supplies, water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, transport and telecommunications. The lack of a developed infrastructure can have disastrous consequences for the opportunities for children to satisfy their basic needs and rights. Sweden's support to the infrastructure sector is given in several different forms, for example grant aid, concessionary credits and contract-financed technical cooperation.

~ Social consequences ~

Despite the positive effect that infrastructure development in general has on society and on the situation of children, the projects can, during the construction phase, cause great strains on children, their environment and their families. Likewise infrastructure projects, when complete, can lead to negative effects for children.

Many men, but also women, are engaged in the construction work of major infrastructure development. They must often move with the construction site and live in new places. This means that the children will either not meet their father/parents for long periods of time or have to move with them which affects their access to school and health services. The construction site becomes a dangerous and exciting place for the games and daily life of children.

Construction projects can give job opportunities to parents and older children which may provide higher incomes and the possibility to improve standards of living. But it can also mean split families when parts of the family move with the construction work. Experience shows that at work places with a large influx of labour there is growing prostitution with an increase in the spread of HIV, an increase in alcohol consumption and a tendency for violence. In many places there are also children among the

employees. Their employment and working conditions require special attention to guarantee that legislation on minimum age is observed, that the working conditions are acceptable, that payments are reasonable, and that their right to education is safeguarded.

~ Participation of children ~

Children have the right to information and to consideration for their situation in decision-making, planning and implementation. When analysing the target group in the planning process it is important to include the children as stakeholders. Major infrastructure projects inevitably lead to extensive effects on the local community and the children often cannot avoid the consequences. In some infrastructure project, sections of the population may have to be displaced. This can be a great strain on the children, especially if it leads to conflict between the adults in the community and the authorities. To avoid prolonged and distressing conflict the local population should be involved in the project from an early stage. The children should also be permitted to participate and helped to understand the situation. The relocation period should be short and life in the new environment normalised as soon as possible. It is important to get school activities started as this gives the children a sense of security and is something they recognise.

The use of appropriate technology, participatory methods and impact analyses from a child's perspective should provide guidance in the design of infrastructure projects. A project shall include an analysis of how it affects children in both the short and long term. The effects on their living environment, their family relations, their education and access to health services, and their opportunities to earn a living shall be analysed and taken into consideration. The basic principles of the CRC on non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development and the right to participation should provide guidance.

Priorities for development cooperation and support from a child's rights' perspective:

- ~ *Integration of the principles of the CRC in the impact assessment of infrastructure projects;*
- ~ *Information to and dialogue with children on planned projects and their implementation;*
- ~ *School and health care programmes for children who accompany their parents when the construction site moves;*
- ~ *Job opportunities for young people and the regulation of working conditions and wages for workers under 18 years of age;*
- ~ *Follow-up of the situation of children during and after the implementation of infrastructure projects.*

4.12 Development of the business and industrial sector

Children, and particularly poor children, are the most vulnerable group in society and the group most seriously affected by economic growth or recession. Growth is necessary to make sustainable social development possible for children. An efficient private sector is a prerequisite for social development and growth, for job opportunities and access to basic goods and other products. Sida's activities therefore include various types of support to strengthen and develop the business and industrial sector. The challenge is to find forms which contribute to sustainable economic growth with a poverty perspective, in which reforms lay the foundation for a reduction in poverty. Major areas are business development, engineering and technology, business culture and financial administration, education and training, financial systems for capital access and credits.

~ Small industries and cottage industries ~

Small industries and cottage industries account for a large part of production for domestic consumption and for export. Regulations and controls are often lacking, and it is usually relatively easy for a person with initiative and access to capital to start an enterprise. The many effects for the children involved can be both positive and negative. Activities of this type can provide a considerable increase in income for the family with possibilities for better housing, food and clothes, for

schooling and health care for the children. But the activities can lead to long working hours, perhaps a poor working environment, and contact with dangerous substances (see further 5.4). Many children work with the manufacture of clothes, toys and food, either in their homes or in a small enterprise in the neighbourhood. It is necessary for many children to contribute to the family income. For the children it is important that they can combine work with education. This can enable them to obtain a better job and a larger income eventually.⁵⁴

Occupational injuries and accidents is a great risk, mainly due to lack of information and knowledge about the hazards associated with the various products used. When manufacturing glass, there are considerable risks for burns; in the carpet industry it is the damage to the lungs caused by dust; and in the manufacture of matches and fireworks it is the risks with the use of sulphur. Since the family as a whole is often regarded as the production unit, the part of the work done by the children is invisible, their prospect of exerting an influence small, and their share of the income unclear.

Support for small industries and the development of cottage industries should be assessed from the perspective of the basic principles of the CRC. Access to start-up capital and credits is essential for many families and individuals who wish to start a small company. Various systems for micro-credits have been developed. They have mainly contributed to enabling women to develop small production units and to increase their incomes. **The access of women to financial resources often has a direct positive effect on the standard of living of the children, particularly in respect of access to food, education and health care.**

~ Export industry ~

Children in the export industry have received most attention internationally. However, they only comprise five per cent of all working children.⁵⁵ Indignation at their situation has led to boycotts, import restrictions and a great deal of attention in the media. The focus has been on children manufacturing carpets in Pakistan, producing gym shoes or footballs in Vietnam, or working in the textile industry in North Africa. When international attention has become too intensive, sales have gone down and the company's image has been damaged. The owners have either laid

off the children, who have then had even greater difficulties in earning a living, or they have moved the production out of the factories and into the homes, where it is more difficult to inspect. Many employers prefer to employ children since they are cheaper. Children cannot make the same demands on their working conditions and they are seldom protected in the legislation since they are under the minimum age laid down in the country's laws. For many employers the low wages provide an important competitive advantage and are essential for them to remain in the market. Therefore there are great advantages in employing children.

~ *Children and the economy* ~

Economic policies pay, as all other policies, little attention to age. Policies which merely promote growth have been proved to have negative consequences on the welfare of children.⁵⁶

Growth is a necessary instrument to combat poverty, but it is not sufficient in itself. An unstable and fluctuating economy makes things very difficult for the poor since they live without margins. The choice of interest and monetary policies affect access to resources and the impact is felt first by the poor. **The difficulties experienced by poor families in obtaining necessary loans can have far-reaching consequences for the children. Especially in parts of Asia there is a system where parents commit the work of their children for long periods of time to pay off loans. For children this is a serious violation of their rights** and a clear offence against the CRC, and several ILO conventions on forced labour. To do away with this system, both prohibition and alternative ways of obtaining loans at a reasonable cost are needed.

The austere structural adjustment programmes implemented in many developing countries in order to eliminate galloping inflation and reduce enormous debts have had serious effects on many children and violated their rights. Schools have been closed, medical services have deteriorated, fees have been introduced for health care and education, and many parents have become unemployed. Many children have been forced to look for work to contribute to their own and their families' support.⁵⁷ The action programme from the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1996 includes the undertaking to guarantee that poor and vulnerable people are protected against the

effects of budget reductions and that structural adjustment programmes include objectives for social development. In Article 4 of the CRC the States Parties undertake to take all appropriate measures to implement the rights in the CRC and to use their available resources to the maximum extent possible. In its comments on article 4, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child emphasises that budget reductions should take the best interests of the child into consideration, particularly where specially needy, vulnerable children are concerned.

A child-friendly economic policy is characterised by:

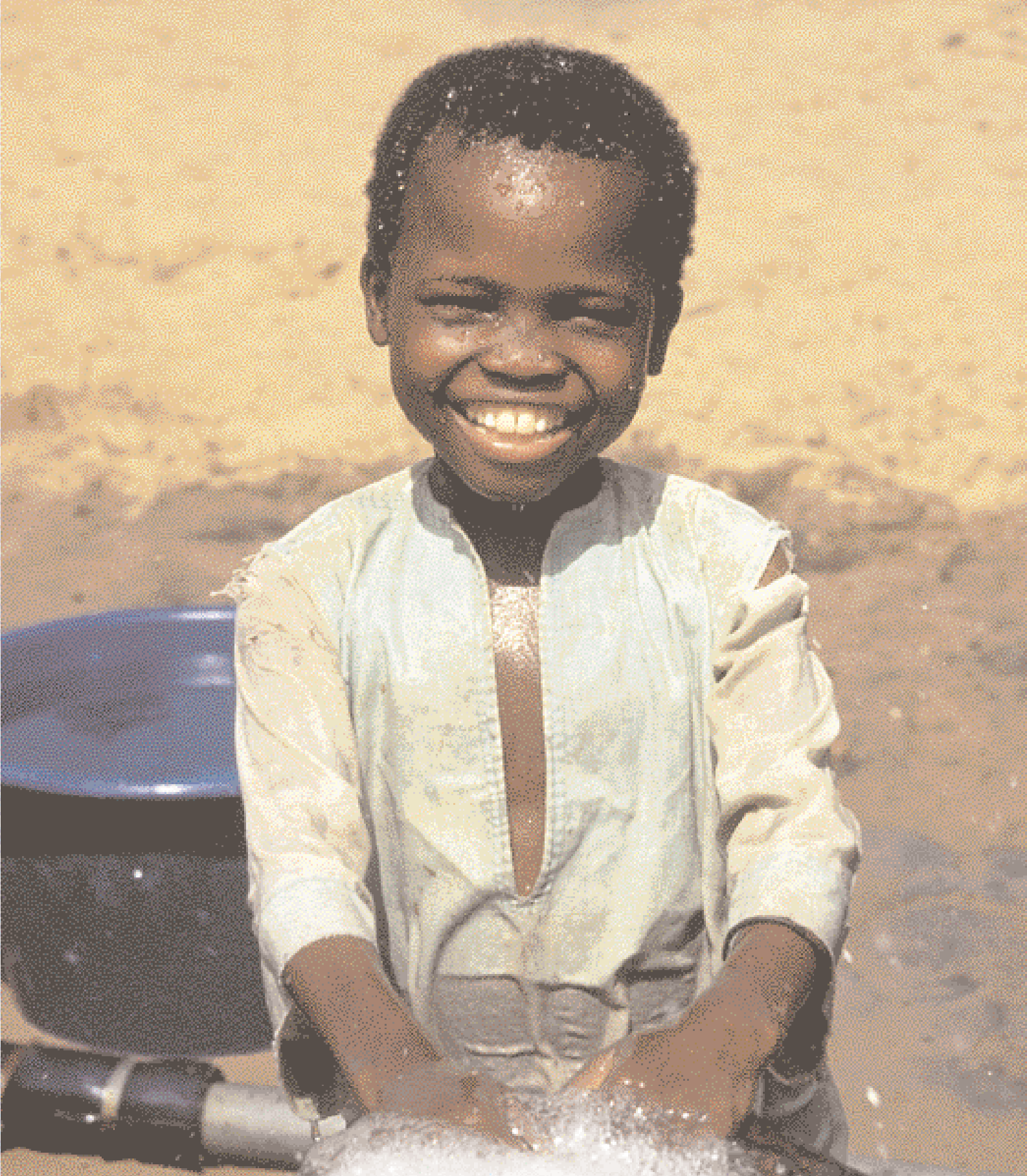
- ~ *an equal division of resources*
- ~ *a long-term perspective*
- ~ *predictability and stability*
- ~ *priority for social and human development*
- ~ *high levels of employment*
- ~ *consideration of age and sex*
- ~ *a broad build-up of social capital*

Priorities for development cooperation and support from a child rights' perspective:

- ~ *Development of economic and political structures and reforms which enable society and parents to ensure that the fundamental needs of children are satisfied;*
- ~ *A children's appendix in the national budget;*
- ~ *Micro-credits for small companies;*
- ~ *Opportunities for poor people to save and to obtain loans which take the situation of children into consideration;*
- ~ *Job opportunities for young people and the regulation of working conditions and wages for workers under 18 years of age;*
- ~ *Development of national legislation and regulation of the economy;*
- ~ *Debt write-off with an emphasis on social sectors.*

4.13 Research

In international development cooperation there are many different areas and issues which need to be studied and described from a child rights' perspective. A child's perspective should be applied in the examination of research applications and the allocation of funds. It is not enough to increase the





research into the situation of children but to study, where applicable, how children, women and men are affected by the problems taken up by research. The basic principles of the CRC should also be used in the planning of research projects and the allocation of research funds.

~ Non-discrimination ~

When allocating research funds priority should be given to projects which also include girls and boys and not only adults. Since children are invisible in most of the research not focusing directly on children, more resources need to be allocated to projects which study and analyse how children, both girls and boys, are affected by different interventions and changes in society. Support should also be given to research which studies and analyses if and how discrimination on different grounds affects girls and boys.

~ The best interests of the child ~

This is the principle most difficult to interpret since the concept of “the best interests of the child” is dependent on social, cultural and geographical factors. If “the best interests of the child” shall be used as a criterion in impact assessments, planning and decisions, more research is needed into how children are affected by alternative interventions. Cultural, religious and social differences need to be surveyed to reflect the diversity, to give consideration to differences and to the needs and potential of every child. Human rights is about the right to respect and dignity despite differences, and the prohibition of discrimination against people who are different.

*~ The right to life, survival ~
and development*

The right of small children to life and survival has been the subject of considerable attention, mainly in health research, and a great deal of knowledge has been gained. Despite this mortality and morbidity



rates are high in most partner countries. The conditions necessary for positive physical, mental, social and intellectual development have not been given the same priority. Research in areas such as political science, law and economics needs to look more seriously at the consequences of current development trends on children, and to examine, from a child's perspective, the theories and practices which are being developed. The survival and development of children is primarily dependent on social and economic developments in society. Health care and education have lesser effects.

~ The participation of children ~

The principle on the participation of children and their right to exert an influence is of great significance for methods development in research. Children have rarely been directly involved in research projects. Their views and experience have not been requested. Instead adults close to the children have provided information about the children. This gives a

lop-sided and not always true picture of the situation. Perception, experience and vision of the school possessed by teachers and students can differ considerably. In order to involve children in research, data collection methods are needed which take into consideration the behaviour and reaction patterns of children.

Priorities for development cooperation and support from a child rights' perspective:

- ~ Research which includes both children and adults, girls and boys;
- ~ Research which specially focuses on the needs and situation of different groups of children in order to increase knowledge and understanding of differences;
- ~ Research which analyses the economy and social policies from a child rights' perspective.

5. *Particularly vulnerable children*



In its preamble the CRC emphasises that there are children living in exceptionally difficult circumstances in all countries in the world and that these children need special attention. The Swedish Government has specified six issues to be given special attention in Sida's work on child rights. These are: sexual exploitation of children; children and HIV/AIDS; children with disabilities; child labour; children in institutions and children in armed conflicts. In this booklet these issues are discussed under the relevant sectors and themes. Mainstreaming child rights into all activities contributes to preventing the vulnerability of children from leading to problems and harm. This chapter gives a short description of the situation in the six groups.

5.1 Sexually exploited children

The situation of children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes first received serious attention in 1990 with the start of the campaign "End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism" (ECPAT). Social workers from Thailand, the Philippines and Sri Lanka had compiled study reports which, for the first time, provided a comprehensive picture of the cruel reality of child prostitution.

Article 34 in the CRC enjoins the States Parties to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The principle that children shall not be subjected to sexual exploitation is embraced by the entire world. Nevertheless child prostitution and sexual exploitation are increasing. There are large sums of money involved and strong interests act to protect the business.

It is impossible to obtain exact figures on the prevalence of the child sex trade. Today child prostitution, child pornography and trade in children are prohibited all over the world. Those involved thus do their best to conceal their activities. Figures presented are therefore rough approximations and they vary a great deal. The UNFPA⁵⁸ estimates that some 2 million girls between the ages of 5 and 15 are forced to enter the commercial sex market each year. Sexual exploitation for commercial purposes occurs all over the world. The spread of HIV/AIDS has led to younger girls being drawn into prostitution since many men hope this will protect them from infection.

In Articles 34, 35 and 36 of the CRC, the States Parties undertake to protect children against sexual abuse, against sex traffic and all forms of exploitation. This is an undertaking most states do not live up to. The rights of girls in particular are severely violated. Violence and abuse of girls and women is an area rightly receiving greater attention in international development cooperation. In particular focus has been on sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Everywhere girls are exploited in more or less organised forms of prostitution and are subjected to sexual violence and sexual abuse, including incest. It can be sex in return for paid schooling and pass marks (the "sugar daddy" system in many countries in Africa), exploitation of young domestic servants by their employers, traffic in girls from the Baltic States to brothels in Western Europe or from Nepal to India, street prostitution to enable girls who have left home or have been turned out to make a living, and rape in connection with armed conflicts. International cooperation in many areas is essential for change to take place.

Sweden was the host of the first World Congress on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Stockholm in 1996. The Congress adopted a declaration urging all participating states to cooperate internationally and to draw up national plans of action to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.⁵⁹ Sida should support countries in drawing up their national plans of action.

Interventions should focus in particular on preventing abuse so that the vulnerability and dependence of children cannot be exploited.

Legislation and international cooperation in necessary to stop the traffic in children, prostitution, pornography and child-sex tourism. Projects need to be developed and supported for the rehabilitation and education of girls and boys who have been subjected to abuse and exploited in prostitution. (See also 4.3 and 4.4 above.)

5.2 Children and HIV/AIDS

Children are severely affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. They are the children who have been infected themselves, but also all the children affected when someone in their family or immediate environment falls sick and dies. In countries where the disease is widespread, the entire community is affected and thus all the children.⁶⁰

Africa is today the continent with most cases of HIV/AIDS. In many of Sida's partner countries 15 to 20% of the population are HIV positive. In Asia the spread of the disease came later and the effects are therefore not yet as visible in society. In 1999 UNAIDS estimated that some 40 million people in the world were HIV positive.

Throughout the world children are in the minority among those infected. They risk being infected either in connection with pregnancy/delivery and breast-feeding, or as sexually active teenagers. For those infected prior to birth or as babies, the chances of surviving their first year are small particularly since many also lose their mothers which reduces their chances of survival. The spread of the disease among teenagers is greatest among girls who have often been infected by older men.

The spread of HIV/AIDS will affect the development of most countries for a long time to come. In many countries it is estimated that 20 to 25% of the child population will be orphans in the beginning of the 2000s. This is an immense and difficult challenge for a society. In addition to children having no parents, a large part of the adult community, for example teachers, nurses etc, is also lacking. Many children have to turn to the older generation or to themselves and children of the same age.

Interventions should focus on giving those children who have been affected by HIV/AIDS in various ways the best possible prospects of survival and development. This includes a tolerable standard of living (access to housing and food), continual support from adults, education, and access to public health and medical services. In addition interventions are needed to stop the spread of the disease from mothers to children and from older generations to young people making their sexual debut. (See also 4.3 above.)

5.3 Children with disabilities

Article 23 of the CRC gives particular attention to disabled children and their rights. Article 2 underlines that disability shall not be a reason for discrimination. Disabled children have the same rights as all other children and the state has the responsibility for ensuring that they are not discriminated against. The UN estimates that there are some 500 million disabled persons in the world.⁶¹ Between 35 and 40 million children in the developing countries are disabled.

In article 23 it is recognised that *“a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child’s active participation in the community.”*

Disabled children have the right to support, rehabilitation and education to enable them to participate in society. Community-based rehabilitation programmes have been developed as a method of giving children and parents support and knowledge, adapted to the local situation and the local community.

At the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca in 1994 it was agreed that the basic principle shall be an inclusive school which, as far as possible, admits all children together. **Children with special needs should, in the first place, be integrated into the regular school and teachers be given the training and guidance necessary.**⁶² Today only one per cent of disabled children attend school. To enable the disabled children to enjoy their right to education, legislation giving them the right to education, guidelines and

methods for their participation, teaching methods development and training for teachers and school leaders are needed.

The implementation of child rights helps reduce the risk of children becoming disabled. It includes, for example, extended maternity and child care, protection against neglect, abuse and exploitation, and protection in armed conflicts. The prohibition of the worst forms of child labour, of the use of land mines, and of the recruitment of child soldiers are important steps towards reducing the risk of children being disabled. (See 4.1, 4.3, 4.4 above.)

5.4 Working children

Working children are a large and widely diverse group, difficult to clearly define.⁶³ It is therefore also impossible to create uniform regulations on how and when children may work. At the same time child labour was among the first areas to be regulated in international law. One important characteristic of children is that they grow, develop and mature until they reach the age of 18 years, i.e. the period which is defined as childhood in the CRC. Something which may be harmful and unreasonable for a child when small can be an important part of the child’s upbringing and development during adolescence and a natural part of life for teenagers in their late teens, for example to have the responsibility for certain tasks, to earn an income and to be responsible for their own money.

Working children can be found all over the world but the amount of work they do varies, as do the conditions under which they work. According to ILO’s statistics approximately 120 million children (aged between 5 and 14 years) work full-time and approximately just as many work part-time. Of these children it is estimated that 60% live in Asia, 32% in Africa and the remainder mainly in America, but there are also many children working in Europe. Africa is the continent which has the highest proportion of working children. It is estimated that 40% of all children in Africa work. **The great majority of children work in the informal sector, in the family or with relatives and acquaintances doing farming, domestic work or selling. Their**



jobs include harmful and dangerous work as well as work which can be stimulating, work tying up the child completely and work with a considerable degree of freedom, possible to combine with both schooling and play. The group of children with formal employment can be found in domestic industries, at construction sites, in the trade sector and in households. Of the working children no more than approximately five per cent work in the export industry.⁶⁴

International legislation on child labour is relatively extensive and goes back to the beginning of the 1900s. It was developed to protect children from exploitation in mines and factories during the emergence of industrialism in Europe. The most important conventions in this area today are the CRC and ILO Convention 138 on minimum ages of 1973 (ratified by some 50 states).

The CRC does not prohibit children from working, but enjoins the States Parties to pro-

tect children, through legislative, administrative and social measures and information, against economic exploitation and work which can be harmful or which can put their health and development at risk. If the work is harmful or not depends of the age and life situation of the child. Work which can have a harmful effect on the health and development of a young child can be acceptable for an older child. The younger children are, the fewer and simpler tasks they should have.

Work may also not prevent the child from obtaining an education. All children have the right to primary education in order to obtain good knowledge of the basic skills. It is therefore necessary to organise education also for those children who have to work for a living. Apart from the time they spend in school, they also need time to do their homework.

ILO Convention 138 specifies the age of 13 (12) for light work during a limited period of time, and otherwise the age of 15 (14) except for work for

which there is an 18 year limit in other conventions. In June 1999 the ILO adopted another convention prohibiting the worst forms of child labour such as “bonded labour”, child prostitution, forced recruitment into the armed forces, and work with hazardous chemicals and the like. The convention underlines the necessity of including children and members of their families in the discussion on changes and the responsibility of the state for providing education for those children who are not allowed to work. The convention is now open for ratification.⁶⁵

Since many children are, and will be, obliged to work, the regulation of minimum ages, working conditions, working hours and wages is of great importance to prevent the exploitation of children. It is also necessary to ensure that the regulations are observed and that educational opportunities are provided for working children. Today the protection of children is often inferior to that of adult workers since labour legislation usually only applies to those over 18 years, sometimes 16 years. (See also 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.11 above)

5.5 Children and institutional care

Children in institutions can include both children who, for various reasons, have been placed there for care and nursing, and children in custody/prison. It is uncommon that children live in institutions in developing countries. The total number of children in institutions is estimated at between six and eight million, apart from those in custody or in prison.⁶⁶ Normally families try to cope with the situation with the aid of relatives. Many children also live alone in groups, for example street children. The part of the world in which institutional care is common is the former Soviet bloc. A number of studies have shown that institutional care is expensive, often leads to isolation from the community, and is a poor preparation for adult life.

The reason commonly given explaining why children are in institutions is that they are orphans. However, many studies show that most of the children in institutions have parents or other close relatives. The children have ended up in the institutions

for other reasons. These can include disability of one type or another, the parents’ wish to give the child a good education etc.

Article 20 in the CRC takes up the situation of children who have been deprived of their family environment or cannot be allowed to remain in this environment. The States Parties undertake to guarantee alternative forms of care for these children in accordance with their national legislation. As far as possible this shall be arranged through placement in foster homes (kafala in Islamic law) or through adoption. Institutions should be considered as a last alternative.⁶⁷ The solutions considered shall pay due regard “to the desirability of continuity in a child’s upbringing and to the child’s ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.”⁶⁸ Local solutions shall always be given priority. When international adoption is considered it shall be carried out in conformity with the CRC (in particular article 21) and the Hague Convention on international adoptions.

A serious consequence of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic is that many children become orphans. At the same time the possibilities in society to arrange alternative care for them is being undermined. In many countries in southern Africa the estimate is that 20 and 25% of the children will be orphans at the beginning of the 2000s. The situation in Asia will probably be similar after a few more years. Arranging alternative care for these children is a great challenge for the States Parties. Institutional care is not a solution since it is far too expensive and there are far too many children involved. Different models of community-based care with the support of neighbours and foster families are being developed.⁶⁹ Many groups of brothers and sisters try to remain together with the eldest child assuming responsibility for the family. They need both practical and financial support to cope with this task, as well as legal support to protect inheritances and rights to land and property.

It is impossible to estimate the number of children in custody and prison. But their situation has been documented.⁷⁰ They are often treated badly, their rights are violated and their situation is difficult. Maltreatment and abuse are common. (See 4.1, 4.2 above.)

5.6 Children in armed conflicts

The consequences of war and armed conflicts on children are receiving increased attention internationally. Present day conflicts affect the situation of children in many ways. Hundreds of thousands of children have been forced to flee as a result of internal conflicts between liberation movements and government forces. For many the alternatives available are to flee and hide or to become child soldiers, either voluntarily or by force.

The CRC contains no exemption clause which give the States Parties the right to deviate from the undertakings of the CRC in cases of conflicts. The CRC always applies in its entirety. In addition the CRC contains a special article on the right of children to protection in cases of armed conflicts.⁷¹ This article refers to international law and the obligations of states to follow this law where children are concerned.⁷² The article enjoins states to take all feasible measures to ensure that children under the age of 15 do not participate in hostilities and that, when recruiting soldiers, they give priority to those children who are oldest.

~ UN study on children in armed conflicts ~

The UN commissioned a three-year study on the effects of armed conflicts on children. The study was led by Graca Machel and was presented to the UN in 1996.⁷³ The study presented a number of serious consequences for children of the conflict itself as well as of the shortcomings in taking care of children. The study has been followed up by two important campaigns. One to raise the minimum age of participation in armed conflicts from 15 to 18 years and the other is for a total ban on land mines. Also when both these objectives have been fulfilled there will still be considerable needs of rehabilitation and support to all those children who have been involved in conflicts or injured by mines.

~ The security of children ~

In connection with conflicts, disasters and flows of refugees, the primary concern has to be the right of children to safety and security. As far as possible children shall not be separated from their parents and, if

this occurs, the work of reuniting families shall be started as soon as possible. It is better for the child to experience the war together with the parents than to be evacuated without them and to live in uncertainty as to their fate. **To strengthen the child's feeling of security, the life in refugee camps or during periods of occupation shall be as normal as possible.** They should go to a school of some form, participate in other activities and their mothers should be able to cook food and to maintain the role as a housewife etc. These are important components of the psycho-social rehabilitation which should also include the possibility to process distressing experiences in culturally appropriate forms and together with experienced personnel.

In 1998 Sida drew up a strategy for its work with children in conflicts and disasters. *Humanitarian assistance with a children's rights perspective*, Sida 1998.

6. Methods development

Sida has been commissioned by the Government to develop a systematic child rights' perspective in all Swedish international development cooperation. All international development cooperation should thus be analysed from a child rights' perspective. Projects lacking a child rights' perspective need to be revised and amended so that the consequences on children are made visible and appropriate action is taken. Interventions where the consequences on children are expected to be negative should either not be implemented or be supplemented with special activities designed to counteract the negative effects. How a child rights' perspective can be analysed and taken into consideration must be a natural feature of all Sida's work.⁷⁴

The country analyses should include a description and analysis of the situation of girls and boys. This will also provide more general information about the country. The ways in which a country treats its children is a good indicator of development in many areas, for example:

- ~ *poverty: malnutrition and mortality rates, proportions of children (girls and boys) going to school or working;*
- ~ *environment: trends in respect of miscarriages, deformities, allergies;*
- ~ *respect for human rights: situation of disabled children, legal security of children, attitudes towards and treatment of girls or of children on the fringe of society.*

All Sida's partner countries have ratified the CRC and all shall have submitted at least one report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.⁷⁵ The reporting process, the content of the report and the Committee's analysis and comments provide valuable information on the situation of children. This can be supplemented with material from UNICEF's situation analyses and the supplementary reports produced by non-governmental organisations.⁷⁶

When assessing the relevance of a project, it is important to make an assessment from the perspective of what the project means for the children concerned. A project which benefits an adult target group can, at the same time, have a negative effect on children. It can, for example, have positive long-term effects for adults but have immediate, serious consequences on the children concerned, or conversely it can benefit adults in the short-term but have serious long-term effects on the conditions of children.

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative agencies or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. (Article 3 in the CRC.)

When the different stakeholders are studied and their points of view and experience analysed, it is important that the children are also included. Children can, in relation to age and maturity, either participate in the same studies – for example RAP (Rapid Assessment Procedures) – as adults, or in studies specially designed on the basis of their experience and situation.⁷⁷ Mostly the interests of children coincide with those of their parents and the adults in the community, but it is not always so. To be able to say that the best interests of the child have influenced the planning process (but perhaps not been decisive), the role of the children concerned needs to be analysed. As children grow older, they can take on more tasks of increasing importance. This is particularly so in many communities where children, due to HIV/AIDS, must take over the responsibility for smaller brothers and sisters, for holding the family together as a unit, and for the survival of the family. An assessment of children as stakeholders must be based both on the children's contribution to the



analysis and the adults' understanding and knowledge of the situation of the children.

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. (Article 12 in the CRC.)

Article 4 lays down the responsibility of the States Parties to ensure that the goals and vision of the CRC become a reality for all children. This requires giving priority to children in the national budget and international cooperation in different areas. The analysis from a child rights' perspective of the project goals needs to clarify how the project contributes to the fulfilment – in one or more respects – of the rights of the child. By ratifying the CRC the states have undertaken to allocate resources and to cooperate to achieve the fulfilment of the

CRC. If the goals are to be relevant and feasible they must be based on the cultural and social reality of the people.

States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognised in the CRC. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation. (Article 4 of the CRC.)

In an assessment of the potential and the risks of a project, issues concerning children have to be included. The states have undertaken to implement the CRC and issues concerning children are generally receiving positive support. At the same time there is a lack of real political determination to implement changes or to protect children from the effects of adult priorities. The risk analysis must therefore





include an assessment of the impact on children both as a group and broken down into components (boys, girls, older children, young children, school students, street children etc). Due to their dependence on adults and their physical and mental immaturity, children are more sensitive to influences and changes in society. The risk analysis must therefore include an assessment of both short-term and long-term effects on children and their living environment. The process leading up to the assessment provides essential data for the dialogue with various partners on possible choices of methods to find the best solutions. A presentation and the awareness of the consequences on children contribute to making the best interests of the child a guiding principle in planning and decision-making.

An analysis of the impact on children based on the four main principles of the CRC:

Non-discrimination

Has the project similar consequences for all children or does it contribute to discrimination against certain groups? Does it contribute or to a situation in which those children who are discriminated against are given the same opportunities as other children? What are the effects on girls and boys respectively, school children and working children respectively? Etc.

The best interests of the child

Which criteria have been used to ensure that the solution selected is in "the best interests of the child"? If the solution is not in the best interests of the child, what alternative solutions are available?

The right of the child to survival and development to the maximum extent of society's resources

Does the project improve the child's actual and felt security and the child's possibilities for survival and development? Have the rights of the child been given priority in both the national budget and the development cooperation budget?

The right of the child to participation

Have the children's own experience and opinions been included in the planning? Will the project contribute to facilitating the participation of children in the future?

Foot notes

- ¹ *Democracy and Human Rights in Sweden's Development Cooperation* 1997/98:76, *Human Rights in Sweden Foreign Policy* SKR 1997/98:89
- ² *Democracy and Human Rights in Sweden's Development Cooperation* 1997/98:76
- ³ *The best interests of the child – a primary consideration implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Sweden summary of the report of the Parliamentary Child Committee*. Barnkommittén, SOU 1997:116
- ⁴ Regleringsbrev för budgetåret 1999 avseende anslag genom styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Sida), Utrikesdepartementet, 1998
- ⁵ United Nations General Assembly Special Session 2001
- ⁶ ILO-convention nr 5, 1919, <www.ilo.org>
- ⁷ The Universal Declaration on Human Rights, article 21
- ⁸ The Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) and the Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (CSECR)
- ⁹ CRC, article 5
- ¹⁰ Concluding Observations on the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Sweden.10/05/99. CRC/C/15/Add.101.
- ¹¹ CRC, article 17
- ¹² Machel, Graça; *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children – Report from a UN-study*. New York, 1996
- ¹³ Address <www.unhchr.ch>
- ¹⁴ Address <www.unicef.org>
- ¹⁵ *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. UNICEF, New York, 1998.
- ¹⁶ Sommarin, Clara; *Advocating Children's Rights in the Human Rights System of the United Nations*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1999
- ¹⁷ CRIN, Child Rights Information Network, <www.crin.org>
- ¹⁸ de Vylder, Stefan; *Development Strategies, Macroeconomic Policies and the Rights of the Child*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1996
- ¹⁹ The World Summit for Social Development, 1996
- ²⁰ The decision by parliament on international development cooperation 1962 (Prop 1962:100)
- ²¹ *Sida looks forward – Sida's programme for global development*, Sida, Stockholm, 1997
- ²² *Justice and Peace – Sida's Programme for Peace Democracy and Human Rights*. Sida, Stockholm, 1998
- ²³ CCPR article 24, CRC article 7
- ²⁴ CCPR article 18, 19, 21, 22, 25; CRC article 3, 12, 13, 14, 15
- ²⁵ Address <www.unhchr.ch>
- ²⁶ Flekkoy, Målfrid Grude; *A Voice for Children*. UNICEF, London, 1991
- ²⁷ *National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights*. A/RES/48/134. *Ombudswork for Children*. Innocenti Digest. No. 1. Unicef, 1997.
- ²⁸ CRC, article 3, 4, 12
- ²⁹ CRC, article 3
- ³⁰ Many Swedish communes are working to develop models for child impact assessments. The Swedish barnombudsman is collecting and compiling information on these activities.
- ³¹ CRC, article 26, 27
- ³² CRC, article 22, 23
- ³³ CRC, article 2, 4, 30
- ³⁴ *Investing for Future Generations – Sweden's International Response to HIV/AIDS*, Sida. Stockholm, 1999
- ³⁵ CRC, article 33
- ³⁶ CRC, article 23, 29
- ³⁷ *Meeting Basic Learning Needs, Final Report of the World Conference on Education for All*. Jomtien, 1990
- ³⁸ CRC, article 28, 29; CSECR article 13, 14
- ³⁹ Sida's factsheet on education, 1999
- ⁴⁰ CRC, article 29
- ⁴¹ CRC, article 40.1
- ⁴² The Salamanca Statement from the World Conference on Special Needs Education, 1994
- ⁴³ *A Chance in Life – Principles and Practice in Primary Education for Children*. Save the Children/UK, London 1998
- ⁴⁴ CRC, article 17
- ⁴⁵ CRC, article 13
- ⁴⁶ *Child Labour – Targeting the most Intolerable*. ILO, Report IV, Geneva 1996

- ⁴⁷ CRC, article 32
- ⁴⁸ *Sida's Policy on Sustainable Development*. Sida, Stockholm, 1998
- ⁴⁹ CRC article 6, 24
- ⁵⁰ Lindgren, Lennart; *Barn och miljö*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm 1999
- ⁵¹ *Children and their Housing*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1996
- ⁵² Flynn, Tim; *Guide on Juvenile Justice*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm 1999
- ⁵³ *Children: the invisible Soldiers*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1996
- ⁵⁴ Child Labour in Ho Chi Minh City; Save the Children/UK, Hanoi, 1998
- ⁵⁵ *Child Labour – Targeting the intolerable*. ILO, 1996
- ⁵⁶ de Vylder, Stefan; *Development Strategies, Macroeconomic Policies and the Rights of the Child*. Rädda Barnen, 1996
- ⁵⁷ *Making the Link – A Report from the International Seminar on Macroeconomics and Children's Rights*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1998. A paper presented by AnneKjelland from the World Bank.
- ⁵⁸ The State of World Population, UNFPA, New York, 1997
- ⁵⁹ *National plan of action against the commercial sexual exploitation of the children*. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 1998
- ⁶⁰ Hunter, Susan&Williamson, John, *Children on the Brink*. USAID, 1997
- ⁶¹ *The United Nations and Disabled Persons: The First Fifty Years*. United Nations/Division for Social Policy and Development, New York, 1999
- ⁶² The Salamanca Statement from the World Conference on Special Needs Education, 1994.
- ⁶³ Boyden, Jo & Ling, Birgitta & Myers, Bill; *What Works for Working Children*. Rädda Barnen/UNICEF, Stockholm, 1998
- ⁶⁴ *The State of the World's Children*. Unicef, New York 1997
- ⁶⁵ ILO – Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 182; 1999
- ⁶⁶ Tolfree, David; *Roofs and roots – the Care of Separated Children in the Developing World*. Save the Children Foundation/UK, 1995
- ⁶⁷ Hodgkin, Rachel&Newell, Peter, *Implementation Handbook on the Rights of the Child*. UNICEF, 1998
- ⁶⁸ CRC, article 20
- ⁶⁹ The programme of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northwestern Tanzania and that of the Nao TASO in Uganda belong to the best developed ones.
- ⁷⁰ *Juvenile Justice*. Innocenti Digest, UNICEF ICDC, 1998
- ⁷¹ CRC, article 38.
- ⁷² Hodgkin, Rachel&Newell, Peter, *Implementation Handbook on the Rights of the Child*. UNICEF, 1998
- ⁷³ Machel, Graça; *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children – Report from a UN-study*. New York, 1996
- ⁷⁴ *Sida at work – Sida's methods for development cooperation*. Stockholm, 1997
- ⁷⁵ Appendix I, Table on the reporting by countries to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- ⁷⁶ The information is available on the net: <www.unhchr.ch>, <www.unicef.org>, <www.crin.org>.
- ⁷⁷ Boyden, Jo & Ennew, Judith; *Children in Focus – Participatory Research with Children*. Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1997

Organisations and institutions

UN organisations

UNICEF

United Nations International Children's Fund,
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
tel (1)212 326 7000, fax (1) 212 888 7465
www.unicef.org

UNICEF

International Child Development Centre
Piazza Santissima Annunziata 12
I-50122 Florence, Italy
tel (39) 5520330, fax (39) 55244817
www.unicef.icdc.it

UNHCHR

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
8-14 Ave. de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
tel (41)22 917 3456, fax (41) 22 917 0214
www.unhchr.ch

UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
94 rue de Montbrillant, CP 2500
CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland
tel (41) 22 739 8111, fax (41) 22 731 95 46
www.unhcr.ch

ILO

International Labour Organisation
4 route de Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland
tel (41) 22 799 7062, fax (41) 22 799 6771
www.ilo.org

UNESCO

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
7 Place de Fontenoy
F-75700 Paris, France
tel (33) 14 568 1000, fax (33) 14 567 1600
www.unesco.org

WHO

World Health Organisation
20 Ave Appia
CH-1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland
tel (41) 22 791 2111, fax (41) 22 791 0746
www.who.org

International NGOs

Childwatch

Childwatch International
P.O.Boks 1132
Blinderna
N-0317 Oslo, Norway
tel (47) 2 285 4350, fax (47) 2 285 5028
www.childwatch.uio.no

CRIN

Child Rights Information Network
c/o Save the Children,
17 Grove Lane
London SE5 8RD, UK
tel (44) 171 703 5400, fax (44) 171 793 7630
www.crin.org

International Save the Children Alliance

275 - 281 King Street,
Hammersmith,
London W6 9LZ, UK
tel (44) 181 748 2554, fax (44) 181 237 8000
www.savethechildren.net

DCI

Defence for Children International
PO Box 88
CH-1211 Geneva, Switzerland
tel (41) 22340558

NGO-group on Children's Rights

c/o Defence for Children International
PO Box 88
CH-1211 Geneva 20
tel (41) 22 734 0558, fax (41) 22 740 1145
e-mail dei-ngo.group@ingnet.ch

Anti Slavery International

The Stableyard Grove Road
London SW9 9TL, UK
tel (44) 171 924 9555, fax (44) 171 738 4110
e-mail: antislavery@gn.apc.org

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BO - Barnombudsmannen

(Office of the Children's Ombudsman)
Norr Mälarstrand 6,
Box 22106
104 22 Stockholm
tel 08-6922950, fax 6546277
www.bo.se

Riksdagens tvärpolitiska barngrupp

(Swedish Parliament's Children's Group)
Riksdagen
10012 Stockholm
tel 08-7864000

RB - Rädda Barnen*(Swedish Save the Children)*

Torsgatan 4,

Box 38400

100 64 Stockholm

tel 08-6989000, fax 08-6989010

www.rb.se

Sida*Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency*

Sveavägen 20

105 25 Stockholm

tel 08-698 50 00, fax 08-698 56 15

www.sida.se

The State of the World's Children 1998. UNICEF, New York, 1998*The State of the World's Children 1999.* UNICEF, New York, 1999de Vylder, Stefan: *Development Strategies, Macroeconomic Policies and the Rights of the Child.* Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1996

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A Chance in Life - Principles and Practice in Primary Education for Children. Save the Children/UK, London, 1998Boyden, Jo och Ennew, Judith: *Children in Focus - Participatory Research with Children.* Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1997.*Child Labour - Targeting the Intolerable.* ILO, Geneva, 1996*Child Labour in Ho Chi Minh City.* Save the Children-UK, Hanoi, 1998Flekkoy, Målfrid Grude: *A Voice for Children.* UNICEF, London, 1991Flynn, Tim: *Guide on Juvenile Justice.* Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1999*Impact of Armed Conflict on Children - A Report from a UN-study.* Graca Machel, New York, 1996*Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.* UNICEF 1998*Investing for Future Generations - Sweden's International Response to HIV/AIDS.* Sida, Stockholm, 1999Knutsson, Karl-Erik: *Children: Noble Causes or Worthy Citizens?* UNICEF, 1997*Making the Link - A report from the International Seminar on Macroeconomics and Children's Rights.* Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1998Sommarin, Clara: *Advocating Children's Rights in the Human Rights System of the United Nations.* Rädda Barnen, Stockholm, 1997

Ratification of the 6 HR-Conventions in Sida's Countries of Cooperation in Latin America

Country	Civ&Pol Rights	Ekon&Soc &Cult Rights	Against Racism	Child Rights	Women's Rights	Against Torture
Bolivia	x	x	x	1990	x	x
Chile	x	x	x	1990	x	x
El Salvador	x	x	x	1990	x	x
Guatemala	x	x	x	1990	x	x
Honduras	x	-	-	1990	x	x
Nicaragua	x	x	x	1990	x	s

s = signed, not ratified

x = ratified

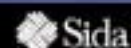


Ratification of the 6 HR-Conventions in Sida's Countries of Cooperation in Asia

Country	Civ&Pol Rights	Ekon&Soc &Cult Rights	Against Racism	Child Rights	Women's Rights	Against Torture
Afghanistan	x	x	x	1994	x	x
Bangladesh	-	x	x	1990 2 r	x	x
India	x	x	x	1992 1 r	x	x
Cambodia	x	x	x	1992	x	x
China	s	s	x	1992	x	x
Laos	-	x	-	1991	x	-
Sri Lanka	x	x	x	1991	x	x
Vietnam	x	x	x	1990	x	-

r = reservations s = signed, not ratified

x = ratified

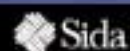


Ratification of the 6 HR-Conventions in Sida's Countries of Cooperation in Eastern Europe

Country	Civ&Pol Rights	Ekon&Soc &Cult Rights	Against Racism	Child Rights	Women's Rights	Against Torture
Bosnia	x	x	x	1992	x	x
Estonia	x	x	x	1991	x	x
Latvia	x	x	x	1992	x	x
Lithuania	x	x	x	1992	x	x
Rumania	x	x	x	1990	x	x
Russia	x	x	x	1990	x	x
Belarus	x	x	x	1990	x	x
Sweden	x	x	x	1990	x	x

s = signed, not ratified

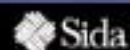
x = ratified



Ratification of the 6 HR-Conventions in Sida's Countries of Cooperation in Africa

Country	Civ&Pol Rights	Ekon&Soc &Cult Rights	Against Racism	Child Rights	Women's Rights	Against Torture
Angola	x	x	-	1991	x	-
Botswana	-	-	x	1995 1 r	x	-
Eritrea	-	-	-	1994	x	-
Ethiopia	x	x	x	1991	x	-
Guinea-Bissau	-	x	-	1990	x	-
Kenya	x	x	-	1990	x	x
Mozambique	x	-	x	1994	x	x
Namibia	x	x	x	1990	x	x
South Africa	x	x	x	1995	x	x
Tanzania	x	x	x	1992	x	-
Uganda	x	x	x	1992	x	x
Zambia	x	x	x	1991	x	x
Zimbabwe	x	x	x	1990	x	-

r=Reservations s = signed, not ratified x = ratified



Reporting to the Child Rights Committee, Africa

00.06.20

	Ratification	Report due	Report received by CRC
Angola	90.12.05	93.01.03	-
Ethiopia	91.05.14	93.06.12 98.06.12	95.08.10 98.09.28
Kenya	90.07.30	92.09.01	-
Mozambique	94.04.26	96.05.25	-
Namibia	90.09.30	92.10.29 97.10.29	92.12.21
South Africa	95.06.16	97.07.15 03.07.15	97.12.04
Tanzania	91.06.10	93.07.09	99.10.20
Uganda	90.09.16	92.09.15 97.09.15	96.02.01
Zambia	91.12.02	94.01.04	-
Zimbabwe	90.09.11	92.10.10 97.10.10	95.05.23



Reporting to the Child Rights Committee, Eastern Europe

00.06.20

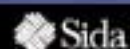
	Ratification	Report due	Report received by CRC
Bosnia	93.09.01	94.03.05	-
Estonia	91.10.21	93.11.19	-
Latvia	92.04.14	94.05.03 99.05.13	98.11.25
Lithuania	92.01.31	94.02.28 99.05.28	98.08.06
Rumania	90.09.28	92.10.27 97.10.27	93.04.14
Russia	90.08.16	92.09.14 97.09.14 03.09.14	92.10.16 98.01.12
Belarus	90.10.01	92.10.31 97.10.31	93.02.12 99.05.20



Reporting to the Child Rights Committee, Latin-America

00.06.20

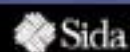
	Ratification	Report due	Report received by CRC
Bolivia		92.09.01	92.02.14
		97.09.02	97.08.12
Chile	90.08.13	92.09.11	93.06.22
		97.09.02	99.02.10
El Salvador	90.10.07	92.09.01	92.11.03
		97.09.01	
Guatemala	90.06.06	92.09.01	95.01.05
		97.09.01	98.10.07
Honduras	90.08.10	92.09.08	93.05.11
		97.09.08	97.09.18
Nicaragua	90.10.05	92.11.03	94.01.12
		97.11.03	97.11.12



Reporting to the Child Rights Committee, Asia

00.06.20

	Ratification	Report due	Report received by CRC
Afghanistan	94.13.28	96.04.26	-
Bangladesh	90.08.03	02.09.02	95.11.15
		97.09.01	
Indian	92.11.12	95.01.10	97.03.01
		99.01.10	
Cambodia	92.10.15	94.11.13	97.12.18
		99.11.13	
China	92.03.02	94.03.31	95.03.27
		99.03.31	
Laos	91.08.12	93.06.07	96.01.18
		98.08.07	
Sri Lanka	91.07.12	93.08.10	94.03.23
		98.08.10	
Vietnam	90.02.28	92.09.01	92.03.30
		97.09.01	





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