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Launch of the Innocenti Insight:
Trafficking in Human Beings,
especially Women and Children, in Africa
EMBARGO: 23 April 2004 at 10am GMT

UNICEF's Global Approach to Trafficking

UNICEF promotes a comprehensive approach focusing on building a protective environment for children. Creating this protective environment is the responsibility not only of governments but of every member of society.

Such a "protective environment" is based on the following points:

- Governments need to ensure that trafficking is outlawed and traffickers punished;
- Laws need to be put in place and rigorously enforced, and international agreements promoted to prevent trafficking and facilitate safe return of trafficked children;
- Children need to be aware of the dangers of trafficking so that they can protect themselves;
- All those who interact and spend time with children need to be able to recognize the risks of trafficking and respond accordingly;
- Research, monitoring and reporting on child trafficking abuses must be increased media attention is a crucial advocacy and awareness element;
- Reintegration and rehabilitation for victims of trafficking need to be guided by the best interests of the child, including the child's return to a safe environment.

UNICEF's approach to trafficking focuses on helping countries build a protective environment for children through:

- Supporting poverty reduction;
- Supporting government commitments to childhood education through the incorporation of life skills into school curricula, fostering enrolment and drop-out prevention;
- Supporting local NGOs, communities and parents through information campaigns, and advocacy for and monitoring the abuses of the rights of women and children;
- Advocating for stronger government political commitments to combat trafficking through strengthening of legislation and law enforcement;
- Supporting capacity building of law enforcement personnel and of those who interact with trafficked children;
- Supporting recovery and reintegration programs for trafficked children.

UNICEF's Programs and Actions in Africa: Updated Information

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UNICEF's approach to fighting trafficking is based upon a sound analysis of the existing gaps in the contextual protective environment. This is why UNICEF's interventions differ from one country/region to another.

Since the closing of the research data collection, UNICEF action in the field has continued. The following is updated information on ongoing actions.

West and Central Africa

At the regional level UNICEF:

- Provides technical support to the signature of bilateral co-operation agreements on child trafficking;
- Works in partnership with the Movement of Working Children and Youth (MAEJT) to fight child trafficking in the region. A Regional Plan of Action of the Movement was finalized in partnership with UNICEF WCARO in January 2004;
- Organizes training workshops for security forces on child trafficking and production of training materials (manuals, information kits, etc.). Training workshops were organized throughout 2003 in Benin, Burkina Faso and Gabon. WCARO is planning more training activities for security forces in other countries of the region for 2004;
- Coordinates and liaises with networks of international organizations and NGOs involved in fighting child trafficking. A Working Group on Trafficking in Persons composed by ILO/IPEC, IOM, MAEJT, Plan International, Save the Children Sweden, UNODC and UNICEF meets monthly in Dakar. Better coordination and joint planning are key results.

At a country level:

- **Benin:** During 2003 UNICEF assisted in training of neighborhood radio stations to broadcast messages promoting respect of children's rights including messages on child trafficking. In collaboration with Save the Children Sweden, it also organized training in child trafficking issues for security forces, custom officers, magistrates and social workers from Benin and Togo.
- **Burkina Faso:** UNICEF supports the establishment of village Committees of Vigilance and Surveillance to monitor the movements of unaccompanied children in rural areas. It also supports the establishment of transit centres for child trafficking victims and organizes micro-credit schemes for mothers of victims of child trafficking.
- **Cameroon:** In February 2004 UNICEF and the government, in the framework of the Co-operation program Republic of Cameroon-UNICEF 2003-2007, carried out the study *Le trafic des enfants au Cameroun à l'heure de la vigilance*. This research focuses on the border areas of the Extreme North, the South and the province of Adamaoua. Field research was carried out in the last months of 2003, the current draft (still provisory) was released in January 2004 and publication is expected in 2004. In February 2004

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ILO/LUTRENA finalized the study *Etude exploratoire sur le trafic des enfants aux fins de l'exploitation de leur travail au Cameroun*, that covers the areas of Limbe, Yaounde' and Mbangassiina. The two studies are complementary and cover almost the whole country.

- **Gabon:** UNICEF established a telephone hot-line to denounce cases of child trafficking and child abuse. The Centre des Arcades (Libreville) was set up in 2003 and is currently working in cooperation with the reception centre for children victims of trafficking in Angondje' (Libreville).
- **Guinea:** UNICEF trained traditional birth attendants on the importance of birth registration to prevent child trafficking. The training was one of the activities planned for the Day of the African Child 2003 (16th June).
- **Mali:** In 2003 UNICEF supported the establishment of two reception centres for child victims of trafficking in the border town of Sikasso, which are now fully operational.
- **Nigeria:** In 2003 UNICEF supported the repatriation to Benin of children trafficked to work in Nigerian quarries.
- **Senegal:** UNICEF supports the repatriation of children trafficked from Mali and forced to beg in the streets of Dakar. Five hundred Malian children begging in Dakar were identified at the end of 2003. Negotiations for their repatriation are still ongoing.
- **Togo:** UNICEF has supported awareness-raising campaigns on child trafficking, using public debates and theatre sketches in rural areas. The project was implemented in 2002-2003 in collaboration with the government, Save the Children Sweden and WAO Africa.
- **Niger:** UNICEF advocates against early marriage through awareness-raising campaigns.
- **DRC:** UNICEF advocates, with the government and opposition armed groups, to ensure child soldier demobilization. UNICEF participated in the demobilization and placement of child soldiers in a temporary transit centre.

Eastern and Southern Africa:

At a country level:

- **Angola:** UNICEF initiated discussions with the government in 2003 regarding the need to investigate and implement measures to prevent child trafficking and the illicit transfer of children abroad. As a result an intersectoral working group was created to review existing legislation and procedures and to eliminate trafficking practices at main airports and border posts. An action plan was developed to strengthen mechanisms to prevent illicit

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transfer of children abroad and some emergency preventive measures at airports and border posts have already been implemented.

The action plan includes:

- Investigation of child trafficking practices, identification of child trafficking promoters and networks.
 - Establishment of coordination and monitoring mechanisms among all the actors.
 - Training of local trainers on child rights and child protection for border post officers, border police and customs officers. UNICEF has successfully advocated for this training to be included in the regular customs and immigration training curriculum.
 - Strengthening child protection procedures and services in refugee reception centres in view of the scheduled repatriation of Angolan refugees from neighboring countries.
 - Development of a social mobilization, public education and information campaign. Reinforcement of legal mechanisms as part of the ongoing reform of child-related legislation.
- A major achievement was the establishment of permanent birth registration services in all provincial capitals and the registration of over 2.5 million children since the initiation of a National Registration Campaign in 2003.
 - UNICEF undertook an analysis of the situation of children belonging to minority groups, as well as on trafficking and economic exploitation of children on the border with Namibia.
 - **Burundi:** There is an increase in public awareness of the problem of sexual abuse, prostitution and exploitation of children.
 - UNICEF has supported the government in establishing a law enforcement mechanism for addressing abuse and exploitation.
 - **Ethiopia:** UNICEF continues to advocate for the government to recognize internal trafficking as a major problem in Ethiopia. The lack of political will to address this issue and inherent cultural attitudes tend to reduce internal trafficking to cultural relativism, yet there is growing evidence that significant numbers of children are being trafficked from rural to urban areas for purposes of sexual exploitation and labor.
 - **Lesotho:** UNICEF supported the enactment of a new Children's Protection and Welfare Bill which will contain measures against child trafficking.
 - **Malawi:** Child trafficking was a major item on the agenda to advocate for government implementation of recommendations of the World Fit for Children, the UN Special Session for Children and the Concluding Observations of the CRC Committee.
 - An IOM study on trafficking in Malawi shows that children and women are especially vulnerable to be trafficked as a result of HIV/AIDS and poverty. Trafficking patterns show flows from Malawi to Europe, from Malawi to other wealthier countries in Southern Africa, and internal trafficking centered on tourist and holiday resorts.

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- **Mozambique:** UNICEF successfully advocated for the inclusion of domestic violence against women and children, sexual exploitation and trafficking in the National Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Interior and National Police.
- UNICEF, in collaboration with NGOs from the provinces, will support community based surveillance systems to combat trafficking and will assist in connecting communities to referral services such as centers for victim assistance and youth friendly health services. UNICEF is in discussion with the Interior Ministry to expand the centres to 'source provinces'.
- UNICEF supported the launch of the regional campaign against abuse, sexual exploitation and trafficking at which the Prime Minister publicly acknowledged the problem of trafficking. The President also mentioned the issue at length during his 2003 end-of-the-year speech to the diplomatic corps.
- UNICEF initiated and supported a review of national laws on whether they are in accordance with the CRC. The report clearly shows that current legislation is inadequate to protect children against abuse and trafficking. The results will be presented to Cabinet and are expected to result in the formulation of a comprehensive Children's Act.
- **South Africa:** UNICEF supports the development of policies, strategies and legislation on child abuse and neglect, trafficking of children, birth registration, and child labor.
- An issue paper on trafficking in persons and children will be released for public discussion in early 2004.
- **Zimbabwe:** Child trafficking has been acknowledged in the Consolidated Appeal Programme (CAP) as a growing manifestation of the current harsh economic situation, which has been aggravated by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
- UNICEF is supporting a local NGO Child and Law Foundation to undertake a study on child trafficking in Zimbabwe.

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