

UNICEF  
INNOCENTI PUBLICATIONS



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United Nations Children's Fund  
Innocenti Research Centre  
Florence, Italy

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ANNUAL

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REVIEW

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1999-2000

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United Nations Children's Fund  
Innocenti Research Centre  
Florence, Italy

The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, in Florence, Italy, was established in 1988 to strengthen the research capability of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and to support its advocacy for children worldwide. The Centre (formally known as the International Child Development Centre) helps to identify and research current and future areas of UNICEF's work. Its prime objectives are to improve international understanding of issues relating to children's rights and to help facilitate the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in both industrialized and developing countries.

The Centre collaborates with its host institution in Florence, the Istituto degli Innocenti, in selected areas of work on child rights.

Core funding for the Centre's work is provided by the Government of Italy, while financial support for specific projects is also provided by other governments, international institutions and private sources, including UNICEF National Committees. In 1999/2000, the Centre has received funding from the Governments of Canada, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, as well as the World Bank and UNICEF National Committees in Australia, Germany, Italy and Spain

This Annual Review provides a brief outline of the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre's ongoing work, as well as work completed in 1999. For further details please consult the Centre's website: [www.unicef-icdc.org](http://www.unicef-icdc.org) or contact Centre staff via email.

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# 1. OVERVIEW

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Since its establishment in 1988, the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre has been a catalyst for the development of UNICEF's leadership role for children in many key areas. Work carried out at the Centre in Florence, drawing on the resources and experience of a large network of experts and UNICEF field offices, has helped to shape the human rights agenda for children. It has also contributed to the intellectual foundation of UNICEF's advocacy for shifts in economic and social policies in favour of the poorest children and families worldwide.

The Centre has made important contributions in four main areas.

- It has increased international awareness and understanding of child rights. Established one year before the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Centre has served as an “engine” for research on the Convention and its implications for all those working on child rights issues. It has acted as a forum for networking and dialogue, as well as for the development of strategic approaches for the fulfilment of children's rights. Its early research on child protection issues such as child labour, the urban child, and the impact of war on children, has influenced UNICEF's work in these areas.
- It has facilitated better international understanding of the impact of economic and social forces on poor children and families in developing and transitional economies and advocated appropriate steps to address the problems identified. Work on structural adjustment policies with a human face, as well as on the transition to market economies, has helped to fuel policy changes to benefit children and poor families.
- It has pioneered socio-economic research and advocacy at the international level for children in industrialized countries. Analyses of changes in child well-being in more advanced economies have also helped to explain the nature of problems increasingly faced by middle-income nations.
- The Centre's research on child rights and socio-economic policy has created and nurtured an extensive network of national and regional institutions dealing with these issues. This support has contributed substantially to capacity building in the countries concerned as well as in UNICEF itself.

The current programme (2000-2002) builds on twelve years of policy analysis and the monitoring of human rights standards that affect children and women in industrialized, transitional and developing countries.

## 2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLICY ANALYSIS

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Research on the impact of economic and social policies on children and families aims to promote policy reform in their favour by improving understanding of, and access to, relevant information, analysis and data.

### Monitoring Change

#### Monitoring in the CEE/CIS and Baltics: the MONEE Project

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Contact: [jmicklewright@unicef-icdc.it](mailto:jmicklewright@unicef-icdc.it)

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have experienced dramatic changes over the last decade – changes that have had a major impact on the lives of the region's children. The Centre's MONEE Project (Monitoring in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltics) was established in 1992 to gather and analyse data on these changes, highlighting the human impact of the transition and advocating for measures to protect children from the economic and social fallout.

The MONEE team in Florence works with UNICEF offices and a network of statistical offices and research centres in the region. The Project has three main elements: an annual Regional Monitoring Report with a Summary and associated working papers; a database; and national capacity-building to improve the collection and analysis of data on children.

An Innocenti Working Paper published in early 2000 describes the MONEE methodology in detail and its potential for replication in other regions. The Centre is now working with UNICEF offices in the Middle East and North Africa region, the East Asia and Pacific Region and in Latin America to develop monitoring projects that draw on the MONEE experience.

#### ■ *Women in Transition*

The 1999 Regional Monitoring Report, *Women in Transition*, provides the first comprehensive assessment of the situation of girls and women in 27 countries. Its conclusions are stark:

- women across the countries of Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union face increasing inequality;
- conditions for women under communism were not as good as they appeared to be;
- some of the genuine advances that were made under communism are now being undermined.

The report stresses that women have much to gain from transition. Indeed, the principles that underpin the abandonment of communism - the search for diversity, genuine political representation, economic development and the expansion of choice - are the same principles that drive the movement for women's equality.

The process of report preparation was of value in itself, with national statistical agencies in the region taking part in research and data collection, thus enhancing their own capacity to monitor the situation of women and children.

*Women in Transition* was launched in Geneva by UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy in September 1999, generating public debate and dialogue with policy makers across the region. Follow-up activities, for example, have included a Plan of Action to address gender issues in Azerbaijan, the use of the report in human rights training in Belarus and for the preparation of materials measuring progress on the Plan of Action for women in Georgia. The report is also being used as reference material in academic institutions in several countries. Over 700 copies were distributed to government and NGO delegates at the Preparatory Committee meeting held in Geneva in January 2000 to assess progress for women since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Delegates from Croatia reported improvements in the information available on women's issues in that country as a result of *Women in Transition*.

The report is available in Russian as well as English, with the Summary report published in English and Italian.

#### ■ *Young People in Changing Societies*

The journey from childhood to adulthood is a pivotal moment for every individual. Young people in the countries in transition are making this journey in the middle of rapid social and economic changes that present grave risks, as well as good opportunities. The Regional Monitoring Report for the year 2000, *Young People in Changing Societies*, will focus on the position of young people across the region, showing how they are affected by these dramatic changes. It will include their views, gathered during group discussions and interviews organized in seven countries. The report, and its summary, will be available in English and Russian.

#### ■ *The TransMONEE Database*

The TransMONEE database is a unique collection of data gathered over more than eight years during the compilation of the Regional Monitoring Reports, providing comprehensive information on social and economic trends in 27 countries. Users can access data on the whole region, sub-regions or single countries, as well as specific indicators and particular time periods. The data can be downloaded from the Centre's website and installed on a personal com-

puter. An online version, developed by the Centre for Europe's Children, is also available and a CD-ROM version can be ordered from: [tmonee@unicef-icdc.it](mailto:tmonee@unicef-icdc.it)

### ■ *After the Fall*

To mark the tenth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Centre produced *After the Fall*, a short publication outlining a decade of upheavals in economics, education and health, for children in institutions, for women and girls, and for children caught up in conflict. The report was launched in Berlin in November by Hans Dietrich Genscher, the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1989, at a press conference organized by the German National Committee for UNICEF. *After the Fall* is available in English, French and Russian.

## The Mediterranean Project

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Building on the experience of the MONEE Project, the Centre's Mediterranean Project focuses on the well-being of children in nine countries in the Middle East and North Africa. While all have made substantial gains in social development since the 1960s, progress has been uneven between and within these countries and has faltered in some. Data on children exist in most, if not all, of these countries, but are not adequately disaggregated and analyzed, making it difficult to identify key issues, design policies, effectively target resources or assess the impact on children of existing programmes.

The Project aims to build the capacity of national governments and institutions by strengthening systems of data collection and monitoring in such areas as health, education, juvenile justice, child labour and domestic violence.

The Project is carried out in collaboration with the UNICEF Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, and UNICEF Country Offices throughout the region.

## The Impact of Economic Crisis on Children: Indonesia

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The magnitude of the East Asian financial crisis that has pushed millions of people into poverty is clearly visible in Indonesia – the fourth most populous country in the world. In 1997 the economies of its neighbours collapsed and the Indonesian currency lost 70 per cent of its value in just one year.

Working with the UNICEF office in Indonesia, the Centre is focusing on the human face of the economic and financial crisis. The Project aims to document the work of UNICEF's 'Families in Focus' approach to the collection of social statistics in Indonesia, for possible use in other countries and will report



the findings of research from 100 Indonesian villages, carried out since 1995. The databases of UNICEF and the Government of Indonesia will be used to examine child well-being in the country. Three publications are expected in 2000: an analysis of the process of information management for children in Indonesia, an analysis of the findings from the data gathered, and an advocacy document to summarize the information.

## **Children in Industrialized Countries**

### **Report Cards on Children in Industrialized Countries**

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The Centre is launching a new publication series measuring and comparing the situation of children in OECD countries. The *Report Cards* will be the first UNICEF publication series devoted exclusively to the subject of children in industrialized countries.

The *Report Cards* aim to help improve the lives of children by revealing good and bad practice through a process of international comparison and the provision of new data. Each issue will focus on a topic relevant to the overall well-being of children and will include a league table of data, comparative analysis and an editorial. The first two *Report Cards*, to be published during 2000, will focus respectively on child poverty and childhood injuries. By bringing an international perspective to national statistics, the publication will provide a vital tool for media, campaigners, parliamentarians, policy makers, researchers and all those working to promote the interests of children in the industrialized world.

### **European Monetary Union and Children**

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The Centre's project on European Monetary Union and Children aims to raise the profile of children in the debate on Europe's future. The focus of most discussions on EMU has been almost entirely on whether the economies of Europe are converging. The Centre's research examines whether the living standards of children are converging – a subject on which there has been little or no debate at all. The Centre is drawing together the data that is available to get a general picture of the situation of children across the new Europe.

The Centre produced two key documents as part of this research programme in 1999. *EMU, Macroeconomics and Children (Innocenti Occasional Paper 68)*, drew the link between macroeconomic analysis and child well-being. *Is Child Welfare Converging in the European Union? (Innocenti Occasional Paper 69)* found that while some aspects of child well-being have con-

verged alongside economic factors, others have not. The paper called on the EU to place more emphasis on the needs of children in its own analyses on economic and social cohesion in Europe.

A more recent publication, *Child Well-Being in the EU and Enlargement to the East (Innocenti Working Paper 75)* focuses on the implications of the possible accession of new members to the European Union. The paper analyses measurable differences in the well-being of children in EU member states and the ten Central and Eastern European countries seeking admission.

## **Child Poverty**

Contact: [jmicklewright@unicef-icdc.it](mailto:jmicklewright@unicef-icdc.it)

In 1999 the Centre published the most comprehensive survey of child poverty ever undertaken in industrialized countries. *Child Poverty Across Industrialized Nations (Innocenti Occasional Paper 71)* examined the situation in 25 countries. It found wide variations in the percentages of children living in poor families, ranging from 1.8 per cent in the Czech Republic to 26.6 per cent in the Russian Federation. The paper was highlighted in UNICEF's *State of the World's Children Report 2000*.

The speed at which children and their families move in and out of poverty, and the length of time they spend in poverty, is a largely unexplored area. There is far too little documentation on the factors that push people into the poverty trap, or on the positive forces that can help them lift themselves out. In 1999 the Centre continued its work on a comparative study of this issue in seven industrialized countries – Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom and United States – to examine why children become impoverished and for how long. The findings will be published towards the end of 2000 and are intended to spur Governments to do more to gather and analyse such fundamental information.

## **Other Areas**

### **Basic Services for All?**

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Five years ago, at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, world leaders agreed that international assistance should be targeted towards the basic social services – primary health care, basic education, clean water and proper sanitation – so essential for child well-being. Today it is clear that there has been little or no shift in the prioritization of public spending or donor funding in developing countries.

The Centre is publishing *Basic Services for All?*, summarizing a forth-

coming book that highlights the shortfall of around \$80 billion per year between what is being spent on basic social services and what should be spent to ensure basic services for all. It examines donor and government spending on basic services in over 30 developing countries, revealing the lack of budgetary information on the provision of essential services.

Calling for greater resources for these services, the report sets out a Ten Point Agenda for Action, including measures to prioritize resources, to ease the burden of debt, and to move towards the 20/20 initiative, with the governments of developing countries allocating 20 per cent of their budgets, and donors allocating 20 per cent of their official development assistance, to basic social services. While the 20/20 initiative was endorsed by the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, developing countries currently spend only 12-14 per cent of their budgets on basic services, with only 10 per cent of aid budgets targeted to these needs.

The publication is available in English, French and Spanish.

## **The New Plague: HIV/AIDS, Development and Child Welfare**

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An estimated 22.5 million people now live with HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa alone. Life expectancy in many countries is expected to fall to levels last seen in 1960 and even earlier as a result of the disease, while health and educational services are collapsing under the strain. There is already evidence of its negative economic impact, with agricultural production falling, HIV/AIDS-related poverty increasing in both urban and rural areas, and falling school enrolment. An increasing number of AIDS orphans are growing up in poor conditions, lacking proper nutrition, adequate schooling and the chance to play and socialize. With young people accounting for a disproportionate share of AIDS deaths, scarce human capital is being wiped out, posing a real threat to economic growth in the region. Whatever the prospects for prevention and treatment, HIV/AIDS is likely to impose a long-term development burden on the countries affected, particularly if appropriate contingency measures are not introduced immediately.

The Centre has started to make an inventory of the available data on the mechanisms through which HIV/AIDS is affecting the long-term economic and welfare outlook of the continent and is developing a framework showing the mechanisms through which HIV/AIDS spreads and – particularly – the long-term impact of the disease. The project will also draw together examples of ‘best policy responses’ in this area. Specific country-based analyses will be initiated in cooperation with selected UNICEF Country Offices. An inventory of the work already carried out by other organizations will feed into an initial

assessment of the knowledge gaps in this area, stressing the need for early economic and social responses to ease the toll of HIV/AIDS on men, women and children.

## **Social Progress over the Last 20 Years: Have All Children Benefited?**

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A review of international trends in the 1980s and 1990s offers a mixed picture of changes in child welfare. While most social indicators improved, on average, in most countries (with the exception of Sub-Saharan Africa and the transitional economies), there is evidence that divergence in social achievements is increasing. Roughly one third of the world's children may have been bypassed by improvements in health, education, nutrition and poverty reduction, or may have even witnessed a deterioration since 1980. This growing polarization among nations, regions and social groups is confirmed by indicators of poverty and income inequality. These suggest that child poverty is static or worsening (except in the case of a few Asian countries), while child survival, school enrolments and access to basic services have, on average, improved. It is clear that the welfare of many children remains dependent on their social circumstances – an issue that must be addressed if the welfare of the poorest children is to improve. The Centre has started to collect an inventory of existing data and studies on the divergence in child welfare indicators from 1980 to 2000, analysing the underlying causes and offering suggestions to overcome such inequality. This work is expected to contribute to the end-decade review of progress towards the goals set at the World Summit for Children in 1990.

### 3. IMPLEMENTING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS

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UNICEF's work in every country is guided by the established principles of international human rights standards, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Centre contributes to this rights-based focus by researching new areas that may affect the organization's ability to integrate the CRC into its work in an ever-changing international climate. And it provides support for UNICEF's advocacy to publicize the principles and spirit of the Convention.

#### Strengthening Capacity to Implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child

##### Improving UNICEF staff capacity

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As in previous years, the Centre took an active role in transferring the knowledge gained from its child rights research to UNICEF staff and partners. In 1999 it organized activities to enhance staff knowledge and capacity, as well as carrying out targeted advocacy to promote the Convention. The Centre also drew on 'lessons learned' from the field experience of UNICEF staff, with a particular focus on the impact of war on children.

##### ■ *Child protection in situations of armed conflict*

Building on the 1997 publication of *Starting from Zero: the promotion and protection of children's rights in post-genocide Rwanda*, in 1999 the Centre completed a case study on Burundi, a country faced with a situation of virtually permanent ethnic tension. Written by Ben Majekodunmi, UNICEF's first-ever international Child Protection Officer to work in the field, *Protection in Practice, UNICEF Experience in Burundi*, calls for greater collaboration between United Nations agencies in situations of armed conflict and the internalization of a rights-based approach into every aspect of UNICEF programmes for children.

##### ■ *Services for war-traumatized children*

In 1999 the Centre published *Bambini fra guerra e pace: il caso di Eritrea ed Etiopia* (Children in War and Peace: the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia), written by Roberto Beneduce, an Italian psychiatrist with experience with immigrants and refugees. The report outlined the issues to be addressed by agencies trying

to help children suffering from psycho-social trauma, including the creation of services tailored to their particular needs.

The Centre also worked with Rune Stuvland, who had completed his term as Psycho-Social Advisor to UNICEF in the countries of former Yugoslavia, on the preparation of a paper on his experiences. *Project Experiences and Lessons Learned* outlined key issues related to the implementation of emergency programmes in general, and psycho-social programmes in particular.

### ■ *Emergency management*

Following a UNICEF-wide consultation meeting on emergencies in September 1998, the Centre is creating a debriefing programme for senior UNICEF staff serving in emergency countries. The first debriefing session will be held at the Centre in May 2000, and will examine in detail how UNICEF develops child protection programmes and resolves management dilemmas during emergencies.

### ■ *Sensitive issues*

The Centre is working in close collaboration with the Child Protection section of UNICEF's New York Headquarters to enhance the capacity of UNICEF personnel to respond to complex child rights issues. As one part of this process, several child rights situations that have proved to be particularly problematic over the last decade will be documented in 2000, together with UNICEF's responses to them. The findings will be discussed at an in-house workshop to examine appropriate responses and determine how to equip UNICEF staff with the skills and resources needed to support the implementation of human rights standards in all countries.

## Ten Years of the Convention: A Review

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Since its adoption by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has been the main instrument for those seeking to influence policy and practice in favour of children. But how much has really been achieved for children in terms of institutional change in their favour?

An independent review directed by Philip Alston, Professor of International Law at the European University in Florence and a renowned expert on human rights, aims to answer this question. The review will examine the impact of the Convention on institutional knowledge and action in favour of children. It will study the effect of the Convention on policies and legislation the world over and at every level, from the work of grassroots organizations to the role of the media, to the influence of the Convention on national constitu-

tional reform. The review will be published towards the end of 2000, with support from the Centre.

## **Child Participation and Evolving Capacities**

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The Centre's research into the issue of child participation goes back many years, with a Global Seminar on Participatory Development held at the Centre as early as 1990. Child participation – the child's right to be involved in decisions concerning him or her – is a unique aspect of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, enshrined in Article 12.

In 1999 the Centre published the proceedings of a Conference on the Participation of Children and Adolescents in the Context of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, held in Bogota in late 1998 (*La participación de niños y adolescentes en el contexto de la Convención sobre los derechos del niño: visiones y perspectivas*). The Conference revealed the complexities and the far-reaching nature of child participation, affecting parents, teachers, institutions, and development organizations.

In 2000 the Centre will launch research into Article 5 of the Convention, which says that children should receive guidance on their rights in a way that reflects their growing maturity and their progress towards adulthood “in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child”. While all the rights in the Convention apply to all children, whether they are babies, toddlers or adolescents, Article 5 acknowledges that their ability to absorb and act on information changes alongside their evolving capacities.

What are the practical and programmatic implications of this principle? What does it mean in relation to parental responsibility or to cultural tradition? The study will examine how interpretations of the “evolving capacities of the child” could influence approaches to the implementation of child rights and will contribute to ongoing efforts to show how the Convention balances the rights of children and the rights of parents.

## **Child Rights in Latin America**

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The Government of Sweden has provided major funding for capacity building for child rights in Latin America through active collaboration between UNICEF and Rádda Barnen. The goal of the project is to facilitate the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child through the promotion of a culture of respect for child rights and through the strengthening of institutional capacity at both national and regional level in Latin America. The project attempts to strengthen legislative reform, increase social and political

awareness and assist with the development of reliable indicators and systems capable of monitoring progress in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Innocenti Research Centre is assisting with policy-relevant analysis of the application of key articles of the Convention, analysis and dissemination of information on law, policy and practice relating to the CRC, and the promotion and development of indicators useful for monitoring child rights. Specific areas addressed by the Centre include child labour and basic education, the impact of armed conflict, the rights of indigenous and immigrant children, and child participation.

The project has also contributed to an increased overall understanding of child rights issues globally and has funded the initial development of the Innocenti Digests. In addition, it will result in a ten-year impact study of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child being carried out by Philip Alston, Professor of International Law at the European University Institute in Florence (see above for more information on *Ten Years of the Convention: A Review*). As part of this study, the Centre has undertaken an assessment of institutional capacity to implement the CRC in Colombia, Ecuador and Guatemala.

## Innocenti Digests

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The Innocenti Digests act as 'road maps' on emerging issues, providing a succinct and comprehensive review of best practices on specific rights issues. The Centre sees the Innocenti Digests as important elements of its capacity-building efforts. This role will be enhanced in 2000, with leading international experts and staff from selected UNICEF Country Offices gathering to discuss the content of the Digests to ensure that they represent the cutting-edge of current thinking, creating an informal network of expertise and commitment in the process.

In 1999 the Digests laid out the main debates on *Inter-country Adoption* and *Child Domestic Work* in a balanced and measured way.

The Digest on *Inter-country Adoption*, for example, cited cases of best practice to protect the rights of children during international adoption, while highlighting illegal adoption methods that exploit children and their biological and adoptive parents. The Digest has led to closer links with the Hague Conference on Private International Law, under whose auspices the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption was developed. The Centre's work on this issue also contributed to the recent recommendation by the Council of Europe Parliamen-



tary Assembly that member states give priority to child rights in international adoptions. The Digest is available in English, Italian and Spanish.

The Digest on *Child Domestic Workers* was the first global report on one of the largest and most invisible groups of child labourers. Linked to the follow-up of the International Conference on Child Labour in Oslo in 1997, the Digest, prepared in collaboration with Anti-Slavery International, described the plight of child domestic workers unable to go to school, unable to play, and extremely vulnerable to abuse. The Digest is now available in English, French and Spanish.

Research into four Digest issues will begin in 2000. *Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls*, will highlight the global dimensions of violence experienced by women and girls in their own homes, examining strategies for prevention, and policies, programmes and advocacy to address this issue. *Access to Education for Children with Disabilities*, will examine attempts to integrate children with disabilities into mainstream education and the overall implications for policy and practice. *Early Marriage* will set out the long-term implications of marrying too early in life for the young brides, their children, their families and communities. There will also be an update of the Centre's first ever Digest, published in 1997, which examined *Ombudswork for Children* – an approach that has rapidly gained ground since that time.

## Child Protection

### Child Labour

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The Centre has researched the issue of child labour since it was established in 1988, producing at least 15 publications on the subject, including the *Global Seminar Report on Street and Working Children* (1993), *Learning or Labouring* (1995) and, most recently, the Innocenti Digest on *Child Domestic Work* (see above for more information on Innocenti Digests).

Forthcoming work will include the publication of a Working Paper by Christopher Heady, of the University of Bath, UK, on the impact of child labour on learning achievement, drawing on evidence from Ghana.

#### ■ Home-based work

The Centre is preparing a study of the growing threat posed by home-based work in developing countries. Multi-national companies frequently contract work to local businesses that, in turn, contract the work to local families. This home-based work is largely unregulated and 'invisible', leaving children vulnerable to exploitation and without access to education.

Surveys in five Asian countries are already underway. These surveys will help to explain the dimensions of home-based work and their findings will provide useful information for those urging action on this problem.

### ■ *Child trafficking*

In 2000 the Centre will develop a research project to improve the knowledge base on the trafficking of children for labour purposes in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly West Africa. As well as filling gaps in current knowledge, the project aims to build the capacity of UNICEF and its partners to play a more effective role in global efforts to eliminate trafficking and the worst forms of child labour. The project will draw upon UNICEF's field work to systematize existing research on trafficking in the region, to map the measures already in place to tackle the problem, and highlight best practices.

### ■ *Inter-agency project*

A new dialogue between UNICEF, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank was initiated in 1999 to ensure greater information sharing on child labour issues between the three agencies. Each agency is committed to improve understanding, both of the economic exploitation of children and of ways to eradicate such exploitation through the generation of reliable statistics, analysis and information.

A joint project, which follows on from the Agenda for Action established by the International Conference on Child Labour in Oslo in 1997, is being launched in early 2000. It aims to avoid duplication of data gathering and research activities carried out by UNICEF, ILO and the World Bank, and also to identify any gaps. As well as assessing data requiring more analysis and the quality of existing data, the project will pool examples of best practice.

The project will be steered by an inter-agency research group with a Secretariat based in the Centre.

## Child-Friendly Cities

*Contact:* [babegglen@unicef-icdc.it](mailto:babegglen@unicef-icdc.it)

A new international Child-Friendly Cities Secretariat will be established at the Centre in 2000. The Secretariat builds on the Centre's many years of research into the situation of the urban child, with training and publications on this issue dating back to the 1980s. The new Secretariat will be part of a global effort to address the needs of the growing number of children who live in urban areas. These needs are highlighted by the fact that between one fifth and one third of the children in the poorest urban communities die before the age of five – a rate up to ten times higher than for children in wealthier parts of the same cities.

A Child-Friendly City is committed to reducing such disparities. An informal network of international campaigners, the Child-Friendly Cities Network, grew out of the World Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996 and is currently based in Italy. The Italian National Committee for UNICEF and the Istituto degli Innocenti are key players in the network, and the Centre will work closely with them on this initiative.

The Child-Friendly Cities Secretariat will document the current situation and share that information with all partners. It will examine the most innovative approaches and will turn its findings into recommendations for those developing child-focused urban programmes. The Secretariat will also create a pool of expertise, ranging from academics to urban planners, and its information will be available on a single, regularly updated database and through an electronic bulletin.

## **Children in Institutions**

Contact: [gfaith@unicef-icdc.it](mailto:gfaith@unicef-icdc.it) (*Child Care Forum*)

Contact: [ncantwell@unicef-icdc.it](mailto:ncantwell@unicef-icdc.it) (*Italy and Spain*)

The Centre is supporting a range of initiatives to examine the situation of children in institutions and to explore alternatives to the orphanages and children's homes that can never replace a family environment.

In Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union, for example, the widespread institutionalization of children is one of the most negative legacies of the communist system. But lack of information on these children is a major stumbling block to reform. Too little is known about why children enter care in the first place, what kind of institutions care for them, or what happens to them when they leave.

The Child Care Forum for Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS is now collecting and organizing this information. With support from the MONEE Project team in Florence, the Forum has launched pilot studies of the child care systems in Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania and Moldova. The National Institute for Family and Children, Budapest, acts as the hub of the Forum. Data from initial surveys on why children enter public care, and why they leave it, are now being analysed. This information could help to pinpoint the key moments in a child's life when action could be taken to prevent their institutionalization.

In 2000 the Centre plans to publish *The Case of Italy and Spain*, a study of the measures taken in those countries to implement national de-institutionalization programmes for children. The study will highlight the fact that policies to discourage institutionalization are not enough: the right climate is needed to create alternatives, including raising public awareness. Undertaken in cooperation with UNICEF's Area Office in Chile, the study will also summarize the current situation in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.

## The Rights of Minority, Indigenous and Migrant Children

Contact: [ncantwell@unicef-icdc.it](mailto:ncantwell@unicef-icdc.it)

The Centre continued its research into the rights of minority, indigenous and migrant children in 1999. Country profiles on the situation of immigrant children in six European states were completed and consolidated, ready for dissemination in 2000.

An in-depth study of the role of education in ethnic conflict, *The Two Faces of Education*, was also completed and will be published shortly as an Innocenti Insight.

### ■ *Conference on non-discrimination*

In partnership with the Regione Toscana and the Italian Committee for UNICEF, the Centre organized an international conference in Florence on 10 December 1999 to mark the 10th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Conference, *No Ordinary Decade for Children's Rights*, focused on the theme of non-discrimination, the principle highlighted in Article Two of the Convention.

Ten young rights activists from Australia, Canada, Romania, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Venezuela and West Bank and Gaza took part in the meeting, with support from CIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency. They were joined by five Italian youth participants, and thousands of Tuscan schoolchildren listened while the young people took part in a round-table discussion led by the Italian television personality Red Ronnie.

The youth participants later joined international experts and practitioners in workshops to discuss the discrimination confronting the children of indigenous peoples, minorities, immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and children affected by ethnic violence. The discussions culminated in the Florence Declaration – a statement of principles to tackle the problems facing minority children – and a Youth Statement drawn up by the young participants.

## 4. COMMUNICATION

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The Centre's Communication team has been strengthened in order to ensure better dissemination of the Centre's work. This has already increased the outreach of publications and seminars. There was, for example, strong media coverage of various events in 1999, including the launches of *Women in Transition* and *After the Fall*, and the Conference on Non-Discrimination. Progress on publications includes the streamlining of publication lines, the creation of a house design and a greater emphasis on the simultaneous production of publications in different languages.

1999 also saw the creation of a second-generation website which will be the main communications tool for the Centre in the year 2000. Links were created to, among others, the International Labour Organization, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, Child Rights Internet, Childwatch, the Centre for Europe's Children, UNWire, and OneWorld. The number of visitors to the site quintupled over the course of the year and more than 10,000 publications were downloaded.

## 5. WHO'S WHO AT THE UNICEF INNOCENTI RESEARCH CENTRE

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For more details, see our website at [www.unicef-icdc.org](http://www.unicef-icdc.org)

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