



GOAL AREA 3

Every child is protected from
violence and exploitation

Global Annual
Results Report 2019

unicef 
for every child

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Ma July Moe (2 weeks) at a launching ceremony on mobile birth and death registration services in Mawlamyine District, Mon State, Myanmar. In 2019, the first ever electronic birth registration took place in Mon State as part of the Mobile Birth and Death Registration project developed through a partnership between the Government of Myanmar, UNICEF and Telenor Group.

Expression of thanks: © UNICEF/UNI212972/Prinsloo

Children play traditional drums at a UNICEF-supported recreational space in the Buterere district of Bujumbura, Burundi. UNICEF focuses its humanitarian response in Burundi on meeting the needs of displaced women and children and their communities and provides interventions such as child protection services and life skills training.



Expression of thanks

UNICEF expresses its deep appreciation to all resource partners who contribute to its work on child protection, enabling UNICEF to support countries in all regions to deliver child protection interventions to marginalized children, their families and communities. This includes, but is not limited to, the governments of Canada, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States of America, and the European Commission.

UNICEF would like to extend particular thanks to its partners who provided thematic funding for child protection, notably the governments of Denmark, Norway, Spain and Sweden, the Flanders International Cooperation Agency and all National Committees for UNICEF, particularly the National Committees for Finland, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Thematic funds are critical in allowing for greater flexibility, long-term planning and innovative programming. Thematic contributions reflect the trust resource partners have in UNICEF and its capacity and ability to deliver high quality support. These funds have contributed significantly to the results described in this report.

Seventy-three years after UNICEF was established and 30 years since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the organization's mission to promote the full attainment of the rights of all children is as urgent as ever.

The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 is anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and charts a course towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of a future in which every child has a fair chance in life. It sets out measurable results for children, especially the most disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations, and defines the change strategies and enablers that support their achievement.

Working together with governments, United Nations partners, the private sector, civil society and with the full participation of children, UNICEF remains steadfast in its commitment to realize the rights of all children, everywhere, and to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a world in which no child is left behind.

The following report summarizes how UNICEF and its partners contributed to Goal Area 3 in 2019 and reviews the impact of these accomplishments on children and the communities where they live. This is one of eight reports on the results of efforts during the past year, encompassing gender equality and humanitarian action as well as each of the five Strategic Plan goal areas – 'Every child survives and thrives', 'Every child learns', 'Every child is protected from violence and exploitation', 'Every child lives in a safe and clean environment' and 'Every child has an equitable chance in life' – and a supplementary report on Communication for Development (C4D, also referred to as social and behaviour change communication, SBCC). It supplements the 2019 Executive Director Annual Report, UNICEF's official accountability document for the past year.

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Executive summary

A young child draws while her parents, immigrants from sub-Saharan African countries, attend an information session on the rights of immigrants, supported by UNICEF, in Tangier, Morocco.

Goal Area 3 aims to ensure that every girl and boy is protected from violence, exploitation and abuse, in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16. The commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2019 offered an opportunity to take stock of progress since its adoption. There has been a rise in birth registration levels globally, with about 3 in 4 children under age 5 registered today, compared to 6 in 10 in around 2000. The prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM) has dropped by a quarter in the last 20 years, and child marriage has declined, largely driven by progress in South Asia. Today, around one in five young women were married in childhood compared to around one in four a decade ago.

Yet, despite these and other advances, around 237 million children under 5 do not have a birth certificate – with 87 per cent living in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. At least 200 million girls and women have been subjected to FGM, an estimated 650 million women and girls today were married before their eighteenth birthday, and around 115 million boys and men around the world were married as children. Every year, approximately 1 billion children experience some form of emotional, physical or sexual violence. An estimated three in four children aged 2–4 regularly experience violent discipline by their caregivers, one in two students are subjected to peer-to-peer violence, and 15 million adolescent girls aged 15–19 have experienced forced sex in their lifetime. Further, recent years have brought forth increased challenges in the form of, *inter alia*, protracted conflict and humanitarian crises, forced displacement, statelessness of millions of children, and digitalization and mass connectivity, which are profoundly impacting children's rights and well-being.

Now, as we close out the year, the world faces an unprecedented global crisis in the form of the COVID-19 pandemic. The devastating socio-economic impacts of the pandemic will have severe and lasting consequences for children and women, including their care, protection and well-being. The United Nations Secretary-General's 2019 call for a Decade of Action to dramatically scale up transformative action towards achievement of the SDGs is now more relevant than ever.

Without further acceleration, none of the SDGs related to Goal Area 3 – particularly targets 5.3, 8.7, 16.2, 16.3 and 16.9 – are on track to be met by 2030. This is further compounded by data challenges, with only 23 per cent of countries having sufficient data to assess progress towards child protection-related SDGs, in particular SDG 16. To address data challenges, UNICEF continues to ramp up efforts to mainstream data on children and adolescents into national systems and plans, develop universal indicators and measurement tools, build consensus on operational definitions and standard protocols for the collection of reliable and ethically sound data on child protection and support national capacities to monitor and use SDG indicators.



Alejandro Xuc gazes admiringly at his 5-year-old daughter in the indigenous community of Chojol, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. A cornerstone of the current Goal Area 3 programming is strengthening efforts to work with mothers, fathers and caregivers to reduce violence against children in the home.

Key results in 2019

The Goal Area 3 theory of change places systems-building across development, peacebuilding and humanitarian contexts (including multisectoral capacity-building) as a key approach to preventing and responding to violence against children and harmful practices. A strategic emphasis is put on strengthening the social service workforce – the most important element of every well-functioning child protection system; alongside supporting social and behavioural change programmes and measurement, including gender transformation and norms.

This report summarizes the annual progress against the second year of the targets for Goal Area 3 in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, across its three output (result) areas (*see Figure 1*). Two years into implementation of the Strategic Plan, Goal Area 3 had progress rates of over 90 per cent for two of the three result areas. Progress was slowest in the result area on access to justice, with respect to outputs on legal aid and birth registration (*see Figure 2*). In 2019, UNICEF worked in over 150 countries at an expense of nearly US\$708 million in its efforts to protect children against violence and exploitation.

FIGURE 1: Overview of Goal Area 3 outcome and outputs

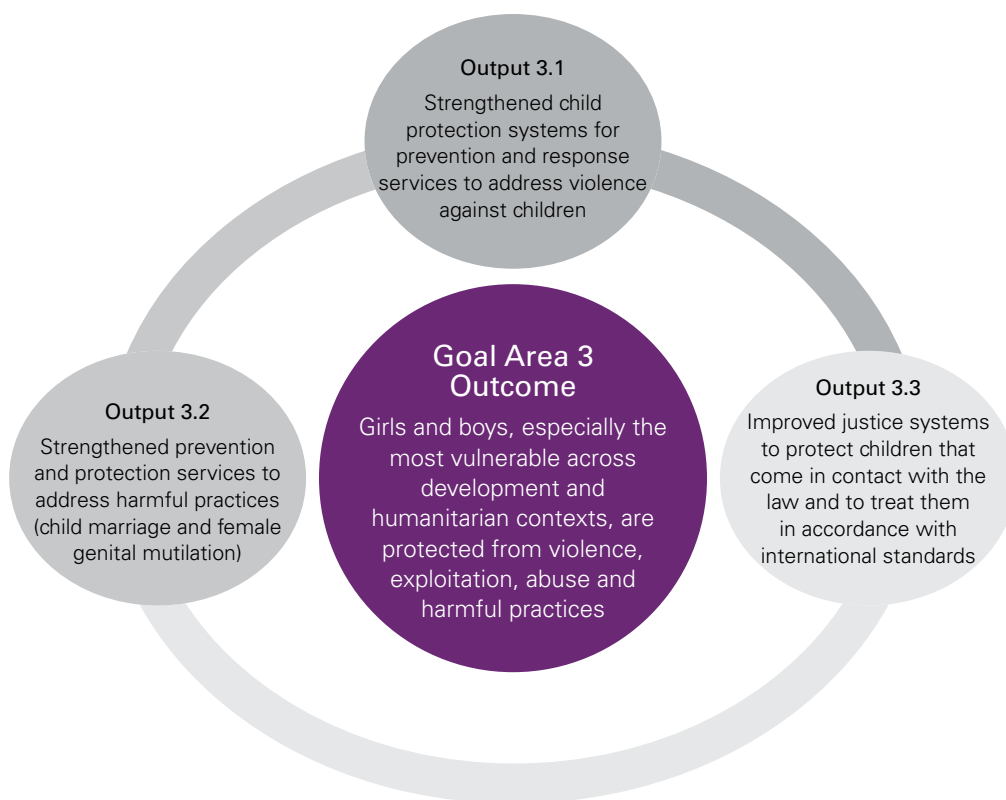


FIGURE 2: Goal Area 3 output area rate of progress, 2019



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