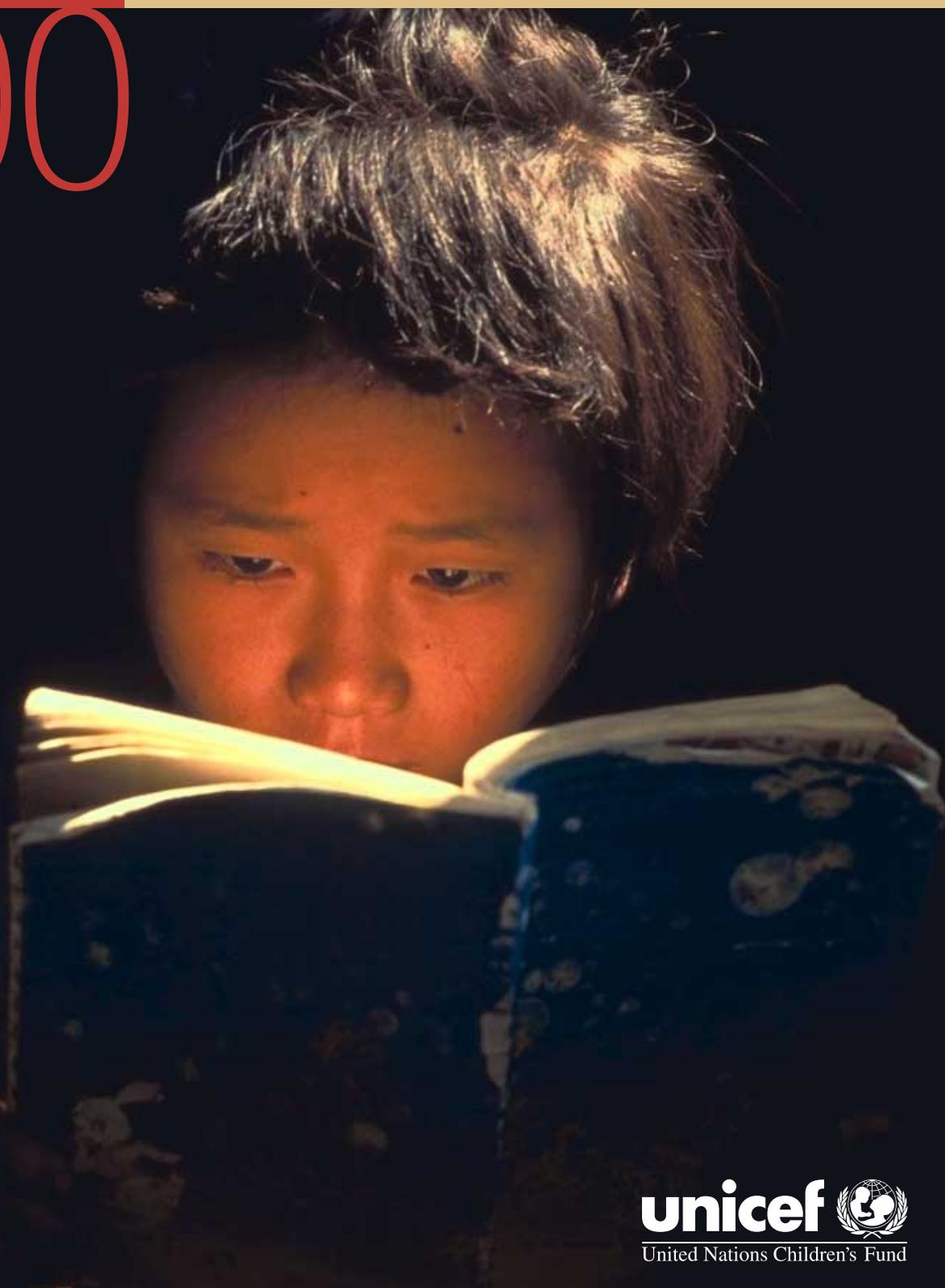


THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2000



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THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2000

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Contents

<i>Foreword</i> by Kofi A. Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations	4
The State of the World's Children 2000	
Reporting on the lives of children at the end of the 20th century, <i>The State of the World's Children 2000</i> calls on the international community to undertake the urgent actions that are necessary to realize the rights of every child, everywhere – without exception.	5
<i>An urgent call to leadership:</i> This section of <i>The State of the World's Children 2000</i> appeals to governments, agencies of the United Nations system, civil society, the private sector and children and families to come together in a new international coalition on behalf of children. It summarizes the progress made over the last decade in meeting the goals established at the 1990 World Summit for Children and in keeping faith with the ideals of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. And it presents the disparities between the visions and hopes of a decade ago and today's reality.	7
<i>Undeclared war:</i> Despite the progress made, the last decade has also witnessed countless abuses of women and children. This section of the report discusses four of the most daunting obstacles to full human development: HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and violence, increasing poverty and gender discrimination.	19
<i>In a single generation:</i> The picture that ultimately emerges in <i>The State of the World's Children 2000</i> is a hopeful one, based on the belief that intergenerational patterns of poverty, violence, disease and discrimination can be broken in a single generation. This section offers compelling arguments about the power of early childhood care, quality education, and participation and development for adolescents in ensuring children's rights and human development. Finally, the essay concludes with an invitation to a grand, broad-based international alliance, necessarily visionary and pragmatic at once, committed to realizing the rights of women and children.	37
<i>We start the 21st century with a vision and a commitment:</i> Ten pages of evocative photographs showing the strength of families, communities, women, children and adolescents.	52
<i>Leadership in the best interests of the child:</i> Fifty-two individuals, representing hundreds of thousands more, who have distinguished themselves by their work on behalf of children, are noted.	
Maps	62
Six maps illustrating child and adolescent populations; life expectancy; learning and education; children and adolescents at special risk; rich world, poor world; and unstable environments.	
	67

Statistical tables 81

Eight tables, with 193 countries listed alphabetically, regional summaries and world totals, present the latest available data on the well-being of children. Countries are first ranked in descending order of their estimated 1998 under-five mortality rate and this ranking is then included in each of the tables: basic indicators, nutritional status, health status, educational levels, demographics, economic indicators, the status of women and the rate of progress since 1960.

Panels

1. SOUTH AFRICA: HELPING CHILDREN BY HELPING FAMILIES	9
2. INDONESIA'S DESPAIR	21
3. CHILDREN'S RISKS IN SOCIETIES ON THE EDGE	25
4. ZAMBIA: HOPE IN THE AIDS EPICENTRE	31
5. SEEDS OF PEACE: YOUNG PEOPLE IN COLOMBIA	41
6. THE EDUCATION AGE, PAST DUE	47

Text figures

FIG. 1 THE GROWING GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND POOR COUNTRIES	20
FIG. 2 THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME IN THREE LARGE ECONOMIES	24
FIG. 3 INCREASE IN NUMBER OF COMPLEX EMERGENCIES	28
FIG. 4 PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BY AN INTIMATE MALE PARTNER IN ANY RELATIONSHIP	28
FIG. 5 POVERTY AND HIV PREVALENCE	30
FIG. 6 GROWING WEALTH AND DECLINING ODA	38
FIG. 7 MONEY SPENT ON HIV/AIDS	45

<i>References</i>	64
-------------------	----

<i>Glossary</i>	66
-----------------	----

<i>Index</i>	118
--------------	-----

Foreword

There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want and that they grow up in peace.

The State of the World's Children 2000 is a rallying call to us all. It is a call to governments, civil society, the private sector and the whole international community to renew our commitment to children's rights by advancing a new vision for the 21st century: a vision in which every infant has a healthy beginning, every child a quality education and every adolescent the opportunity to develop his or her unique abilities. It is a call to families and communities – and to children and adolescents themselves – to make their voices heard in helping translate this vision to reality in their daily lives.

This report tells of the many ways the world's commitment to children has been translated into action – particularly since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 and the World Summit for Children the following year. More children are born healthy and more are immunized; more can read and write; more are free to learn, play and simply live as children than would have been thought possible even a short decade ago.

But as *The State of the World's Children 2000* so eloquently tells us, this is no time to stand on past achievements. Millions of children continue to endure the dreadful indignities of poverty; hundreds of thousands suffer the effects of conflict and economic chaos; tens of thousands are maimed in wars; many more are orphaned or killed by HIV/AIDS.

The State of the World's Children 2000 begins and ends with the premise that the wellspring of human progress is found in the realization of children's rights. It spells out a vision in which the rights of all children, without exception, are realized. The challenge, as so often, lies in the implementation of good intentions. Let us summon all our courage and commitment to make it so. Because a child in danger is a child who cannot wait.



Kofi A. Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations

A vision for the 21st century



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