



Save the Children

Child Protection Initiative



Photographer's Credit: Robert King/Polaris

Taking action against all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence

By 2015, Save the Children aims to have improved the lives of **21 million children** through preventative and remedial child protection measures.

The **Child Protection Initiative** focuses on:

- **Children without appropriate care:** including neglected and/or abused children in their families, children in institutions or other forms of alternative care, and children on the move, including child refugees, child migrants and trafficked children.
- **Child protection in emergencies:** including sexual violence, children associated with armed forces and groups, and family separation.
- **Child labour:** strategy to be developed in 2011.

Our Theory of Change

- **Be the voice for children**, advocating and campaigning for better practices and policies to fulfill children's right to protection.
- **Achieve results at scale** and support the implementation of best practices, programmes and policies to ensure sustainable impact in ending violence against children.
- **Be the innovator** and develop and prove evidence based replicable breakthrough child protection solutions.
- **Build partnerships** and collaborate with children, civil society, communities and families, governments, and the private sector to share knowledge, build capacity and influence others.



Photographer's Credit: Usman Ghani

Story of Success

The Family Centres (FCs) initiative works with children at risk or survivors of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation living in the Gaza. FCs provides access to quality psychosocial services and serve as a meeting point for children and caregivers. FCs also offer mothers and fathers a place to talk about their experiences, and see their children develop with trained guidance. They provide information on children's rights and staff working at the FCs report and monitor child rights violations and refer them to national services.

Wael, a 6-year-old boy from Beit Lahia, Gaza, has grown up in an environment influenced by violence. Eventually Wael started becoming aggressive himself. Wael and his family attended social support and counseling sessions at the FC. The social workers also visited the family in their home. The support sessions gave Wael and his family space to freely express their feelings.

Impact

- Built the capacity of 20 local grassroots groups so they can act as Family Centres (FCs).
- FCs have reached 1147 children through group and individual counseling and 150 caregivers through psychosocial awareness.
- Wael's parents became more communicative and Wael started to play with his younger brother, instead of hurting him.
- From August 2009 until December 2010 the services provided by the Family Centres reached a total of 218,996 beneficiaries in Gaza.

Why work in our Priority Area's?

Children without appropriate care and children on the move

Children often enter residential care institutions because families are too poor and lack adequate support. Children also enter institutions because of HIV and AIDS and emergency situations. Many institutions are unregulated and unsafe, and children are vulnerable to violence. Children may also leave home for work, education, to escape conflict, disasters or family violence, or because they are trafficked. Sometimes they move with their parents and relatives, but many are alone.

Save the Children will:

- Offer support to families to care for their children and prevent family separation.
- Support the development of family-based care alternatives in children's own communities.
- Prevent children from exploitation, increase children's choices and improve access to services, support and opportunities.

Child protection in emergencies

Children affected by armed conflict or natural disasters are vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation, including rape, forced prostitution, physical harm, psychological distress and economic exploitation. Children recruited into armed groups are killed, maimed, abused and exploited. Girls are forcibly taken as 'wives' and repeatedly raped. During and after an emergency, children may be separated from their parents and are more at risk of being recruited into armed forces, abducted, trafficked or sexually abused and exploited.

Save the Children will:

- Prevent children from being recruited or abducted into armed groups and forces.
- Put systems in place to ensure children are not separated from their families.
- Reunite children with their families.
- Strengthen systems to prevent sexual violence in emergencies.

Our Approach

1. A **Child rights** approach in which every child has a non-negotiable right to protection and care.
2. Supporting **Children's right to Participation** and efforts to fight against discrimination, abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.
3. Advocating for National **Child Protection Systems** to prevent and respond to violence against children that are coordinated, sustainable and sufficiently resourced.

Save the Children's definitions

Child protection –

Measures and structures to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence affecting children

Children without appropriate care –

Children who are not receiving suitable, continuous and quality care, nurture and guidance at a physical, emotional, social and psychological level from either their families or from other primary carers that are meant to replace the family environment and are responsible for their well being and development

Children on the move –

Children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers, and whose movement might place them at risk (or at an increased risk) of inadequate care, economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence

Child protection in emergencies –

The prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation of and violence against children in emergencies. An emergency is defined as 'a situation where lives, physical and mental wellbeing, or development opportunities for children are threatened as a result of armed conflict, disaster or the breakdown of social or legal order, and where local capacity to cope is exceeded or inadequate'.



Photographer's Credit: Karin Beate Nosterud, Save the Children