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Children's Rights and Business Principles

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Introduction

Children under 18 years old account for almost one third of the world's population. In many countries, children and youth make up almost one half of the national population. It is inevitable that business, whether small or large, will interact with and have an effect on the lives of children both directly and indirectly. Children are key stakeholders of business – as consumers, family members of employees, young workers, and as future employees and business leaders. At the same time, children are key members of the communities and environments in which business operates.

With increased attention being paid to the role of business in society in parallel to governments and other societal actors, and with greater awareness of the links between business and human rights, the explicit focus on the impact of business on children is also timely. Children are among the most marginalized and vulnerable members of society and this is evident from their lacking a public voice. They are rarely given a say or consulted about how communities make decisions – even decisions affecting them directly, such as planning for schools and recreational areas. Yet, when given the opportunity to participate, children have demonstrated that they can provide important alternative viewpoints and make valuable contributions.

The effects that business has on children can be long-lasting and even irreversible. Childhood is a unique period of rapid physical and psychological development during which young people's physical, mental and emotional health and well-being can be permanently affected for better or worse. Adequate food, clean water, and care and affection during a child's developing years are essential to his or her survival and health.

Children are even affected by everyday hazards differently and more severely than adults. Due to their physiology, children absorb a higher percentage of pollutants to which they are exposed, and thus their immune systems are more compromised and vulnerable.

Children employed or affected by a business are often invisible. Typical examples include children working illicitly in the supply chain, children on or around company premises, children employed as domestic workers in employee housing, children exposed to business products, children arrested and detained by security services and children of migrant workers left at home.

To date, recognition of the responsibility of business towards children has often focused on preventing or eliminating child labour. While reinforcing standards and actions necessary to prevent and eliminate child labour, the Children's Rights and Business Principles also highlight the diversity of ways in which business affects children. This includes the impact of their overall business operations – such as their products and services and their marketing methods and distribution practices – as well as through their relationships with national and local governments, and investments in local communities.

Respecting and supporting children's rights requires business to both prevent harm and actively safeguard children's interests. By integrating respect and support for children's rights into the core strategies and operations, they can strengthen their existing corporate sustainability initiatives while ensuring benefits for their business. Such efforts can build reputation, improve risk management and secure their 'social license to operate'. A commitment to children can also help recruit and maintain a motivated workforce. Supporting employees in their roles as parents and caregivers, and promoting youth employment and talent generation are just some of the concrete steps that business can take. Considering how products and services can better meet children's needs can also be a source of innovation and create new markets. Finally, working for children helps build strong, well-educated communities that are vital to a stable, inclusive and sustainable business environment.

The Children's Rights and Business Principles provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and addressing the impact of business on the rights and well-being of children. Save the Children, the UN Global Compact and UNICEF hope that these Principles will serve as inspiration and a guide for all business in their interactions with children.



Children's Rights and Business Principles



The Children's Rights and Business Principles set out business actions to *respect* and *support* children's rights. Children's rights are outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the International Labour Organization's Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age and Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour. Article 3 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the principle that, "In all actions concerning children ... the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."

For the purposes of these Principles, actions for all business include:

THE CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY TO RESPECT -- avoiding any infringement of the human rights of others, including children, and addressing any adverse human rights impact with which the business is involved. The corporate responsibility to respect applies to the business's own activities and to its *business relationships*, linked to its operations, products or services.

THE CORPORATE COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT -- in addition to respecting human rights, voluntary actions that seek to advance human rights, including children's rights, through core business activities, strategic social investments and philanthropy, advocacy and public policy engagement, and working in partnership and other collective action.

Respect for children's rights is the minimum required of business. Actions to support children's rights are strongly encouraged even if not required. Each Principle in the Children's Rights and Business Principles lays out actions to respect children's rights and actions to support children's rights.

In this document, the phrase 'children's rights' is synonymous with the 'human rights of children'.



Glossary

With the exception of child/children and business, the following defined terms are italicized throughout the Principles.

best interests of the child – one of the four core principles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, this applies to all actions and decisions concerning children and calls for active measures to respect their rights and promote their survival, growth and well-being as children, as well as measures to support and assist parents and others who have day-to-day responsibility for realizing children’s rights.

business – a for-profit enterprise.

business relationship – those relationships a business has with business partners, entities in its *value chain*, and any other State or non-state (government or non-governmental) entity directly linked to its business operations, products or services. This includes indirect business relationships in an enterprise’s *value chain*, beyond the first tier, as well as majority and minority shareholding positions in joint ventures.

child labour – work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. This includes work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; work that interferes with their schooling; and engaging in work children who are under the minimum working age(s) set by national legislation or international standards. No child under 18 years old should be engaged in hazardous work (i.e. work that is likely to harm their health, safety or morals) or other worst forms of child labour such as trafficking, sexual exploitation, debt bondage, forced labour and the recruitment or use of underage children for security or military purposes. This also involves focus on the gender dimensions of child labour in light of the more likely engagement of girls in activities such as domestic work and sexual exploitation. For further elaboration, see the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and No. 138 on the Minimum Age, in addition to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

child participation – one of the four core principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, this includes processes that encourage and enable children to articulate and convey their views on issues that affect them. It also involves information sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect in an environment that facilitates freedom of expression. Such processes must be authentic, inclusive and meaningful and should take into account the evolving capacities of children and enable them to learn constructive ways to influence the world around them. There should be a

commitment to consider children’s opinions – including girls and boys, the most marginalized, the vulnerable, and those of different ages and abilities. Their views should be respected, heard and taken into account in all decisions and actions affecting them. Participation should not be tokenistic and should not exploit children.

child protection code of conduct – a document that sets out the business’s detailed expectations of conduct for individuals within its operations who come into contact with children. The code of conduct implements the business’s zero-tolerance policy on violence, exploitation and abuse. It uses the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols as its framework and is designed to help protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse.

child or children – article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child defines children as every human being under 18 years old unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

decent work – involves opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income. Decent work should provide security in the workplace and social protection for families, rights at work, social dialogue, and better prospects for personal development and social integration. People, including young people of working age, should be free to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and have the right to equality of opportunity and treatment.

emergencies – situations where lives, physical and mental well-being, or development opportunities for children are threatened as a result of armed conflict, widespread violence, epidemics, famine, natural disaster or the breakdown of social or legal order.

human rights due diligence – a business’s ongoing processes for assessing its actual and potential human rights impact, including on children’s rights, integrating and acting upon its findings, tracking its responses and communicating how its impact is addressed, as set out in the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights endorsed by the United Nations Human Rights Council.¹ *Human rights due diligence* should cover adverse impact that the business may cause or contribute to through its own activities, or which may be directly linked to its operations, products or services by a business relationship. To carry out human rights due diligence, all business should:

- Identify and assess any actual or potential adverse impact on children’s rights. This should draw on human rights expertise and involve meaningful consultation with children and other potentially affected groups and relevant stakeholders. It should take into account that girls and boys may face different risks.

¹ ‘Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework’ as annexed to the Report of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, A/HRC/17/31, United Nations, 21 March 2011, available at www.ohchr.org/documents/issues/business/A.HRC.17.31.pdf Endorsed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in A/HRC/RES/17/4.

- Integrate the findings from their impact assessments across relevant internal functions and processes and take appropriate action (as defined in the Guiding Principles). Where a business causes or contributes to an adverse impact on children’s rights, or where it may do so, it should take the necessary steps to cease or prevent the activity, or its contribution to it, and use its leverage to mitigate any remaining impact. Where a business is linked to an adverse impact by a business relationship, it should use its leverage and consider other relevant factors in determining the appropriate action to take.
- Monitor and track the effectiveness of the business’s responses in order to verify whether the adverse impact on children’s rights is being addressed, using appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators and drawing on feedback from internal and external sources, including affected children, families and other stakeholders.² The business should consider using tools such as performance contracts and reviews, surveys and audits (self-assessments or independent audits) on a periodic basis.³
- Be prepared to communicate externally on its efforts to address the impact of business on children’s rights in a form and frequency that reflect such an impact and that is accessible to its intended audiences. The business should provide sufficient information to evaluate the adequacy of its responses. Such communication should not pose risks to affected stakeholders, personnel or to legitimate requirements of commercial confidentiality.

These processes should be appropriate to the business’s size and circumstances and be in alignment with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

leverage – the ability of a business to effect change in the wrongful practices of the party that is causing or contributing to an adverse impact on human rights. Where a business has leverage to prevent or mitigate an adverse impact on human rights that is directly linked to its operations, products or services by a *business relationship*, it should use that leverage. If it lacks leverage, there may be ways to increase it, for example, by offering capacity-building or other incentives, or collaborating with other actors. The business should also consider how crucial the relationship is to the business, the severity of the impact, and whether terminating the relationship would have adverse human rights consequences, following the approach set out in Principle 19 of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

non-discrimination – one of the four core principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, this provides for equal treatment of an individual irrespective of race, colour, sex, language, disability, religion, political or other opinions; national, social or

indigenous origin; and property, birth or other status. In short, it means that all children – in all situations, all of the time, everywhere – have the same right to develop to their full potential.

policy commitment – a statement that sets out the business’s responsibility to respect rights, including children’s rights, as described in the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. A policy commitment should be approved at the most senior level of the business and be informed by relevant expertise. It should stipulate the business’s expectations of personnel, business partners and others directly linked to its operations, products or services. It should be publicly available, communicated internally and externally, and embedded in relevant policies and procedures. It may also include a statement of the business’s commitment to support rights.

remediation – both the processes of providing a remedy for an adverse human rights impact and to the substantive outcomes that can counteract, or make good, the adverse impact. Where a business identifies that it has caused or contributed to an adverse impact on human rights, it should provide for or cooperate in their remediation through legitimate processes, including effective operational level grievance mechanisms or judicial mechanisms, as appropriate. Operational level mechanisms should be accessible to girls and boys, their families and those who represent their interests, and meet the effectiveness criteria for non-judicial grievance mechanisms set out in Principle 31 of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

survival and development – one of the four core principles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, this recognizes that there are optimal conditions for childhood. Rights such as social security, health, adequate nutrition and standard of living, a healthy and safe environment, education, leisure and play are all relevant to ensuring the healthy development of each child. Protection from violence and exploitation is also vital to each child’s survival and development.

value chain – a business’s value chain encompasses the activities that convert inputs into outputs by adding value. It includes entities with which the business has a direct or indirect business relationship and which either a) supply products or services that contribute to the business’s own products or services, or b) receive products or services from the business.

young worker – a child who is above the minimum legal working age and engaged in economic activity. It is an age group that is subject to designation as child labour if the work or working conditions are hazardous.

² When direct consultation with affected stakeholders is not possible for small and medium sized business with limited human rights risks, due to legitimate financial, geographical or other constraints, the business should seek other independent external expert resources and insights offered by organizations or individuals that legitimately convey the perspectives – or likely perspectives – of those who may be affected by the enterprise’s activities or relationships.

³ Regarding suppliers, in addition to communicating clearly expectations of conduct, steps that business may take also include examples of capacity building efforts and collaborating with other business to increase leverage. For further guidance, see UN Global Compact supply chain sustainability guidance: http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/supply_chain/SupplyChainRep_spread.pdf

"We are not the sources of problems; we are the resources that are needed to solve them. We are not expenses; we are investments. We are not just young people; we are people and citizens of this world."

From 'A World Fit for Us', Message from the Children's Forum, 5-7 May 2002, United Nations Special Session on Children.



Children in Fact

- There are 2.2 billion children under 18 years old in the world - this is almost one third of the world's population.
- Adolescents, age 10-19, represent 18 per cent of the total population.
- 1 billion children are deprived of one or more services essential to survival and development.
- 2 million children under age 15 worldwide are living with HIV.
- 215 million children are engaged in child labour.
- 101 million children are not attending primary school.
- 51 million children are unregistered at birth.

For more statistics on children, see <http://www.childinfo.org/index.html>

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

- 1 Meet their responsibility to respect children's rights and commit to supporting the human rights of children
- 2 Contribute to the elimination of **child labour**, including in all business activities and business relationships
- 3 Provide decent work for **young workers, parents and caregivers**
- 4 Ensure the **protection and safety of children** in all business activities and facilities
- 5 Ensure that **products and services** are safe, and seek to support children's rights through them
- 6 Use **marketing and advertising** that respect and support children's rights
- 7 Respect and support children's rights in relation to the **environment and to land** acquisition and use
- 8 Respect and support children's rights in **security arrangements**
- 9 Help protect children affected by **emergencies**
- 10 Reinforce **community and government efforts** to protect and fulfil children's rights

Preamble

All children have rights, everywhere and at all times.⁴ And all children's rights are equally important and interrelated. The Children's Rights and Business Principles (the Principles) call on business everywhere to respect and support children's rights throughout their activities and *business relationships*, including in the workplace, the marketplace, the community and the environment. The Principles identify a comprehensive range of actions that all business should take to prevent and address any adverse impact on children's human rights, as well as measures all business is encouraged to take to help advance children's rights. The Principles aspire to be a key reference point for existing and future voluntary and other initiatives on business and children, and to promote multi-stakeholder collaboration. They are for all business, transnational and other, regardless of their size, sector, location, ownership and structure. The Principles also seek to inform other societal actors, including governments and civil society, in their engagement with business.

As a result of their rapid physical and psychological development, children have survival and development needs that differ from those of adults. Children are particularly vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse, especially during emergencies. The impact of climate change and pollution on children can also be more serious and long-lasting than those on adults. At the same time, children make important contributions to their households, communities and societies. Children are key stakeholders of business – as consumers, future employees and business leaders, and as members of the communities and environments in which a business operates. They should be empowered to have a voice in decisions that affect them in line with the principle of child participation as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Principles are derived from the internationally recognized human rights of children, and do not create new international legal obligations. In particular, they are founded on the rights outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols. The Convention is the most widely ratified human rights treaty: 193 countries are currently States parties (governments that have signed and ratified the Convention). The Principles are also based on the International Labour Organization's Conventions No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and No. 138 on the Minimum Age.⁵

The Principles also elaborate on existing standards for business, such as the United Nations Global Compact's 'Ten Principles'⁶ and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights endorsed by the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Governments at all levels have the duty to protect, respect and fulfil children's rights. However, all societal actors, including business, must comply with applicable national law and respect international standards on children's rights. Responding to the international community's call on all members of society to join in a global movement that will help build a world fit for children, the Principles seek to elaborate business's role in respecting and supporting children's rights.⁷

Nothing in the Principles should be taken to justify application of standards lower than those in force in a particular country or under international law.

The Principles were developed in consultation with children, business, investors, trade unions, national human rights institutions, civil society, governments, academics, United Nations entities, child rights experts and business experts.



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⁴ The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines children as every human being under 18 years old, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

⁵ Other international standards with relevant provisions include the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). The United Nations Study on Violence against Children (2006) is another key reference document.

⁶ See www.unglobalcompact.org

⁷ A World Fit for Children (2002). See also, A World Fit for Children Plus 5 (2007).

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ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“Do not take advantage of us, we ask you to be responsible. Do not support us because you feel pity for us; instead support us because we deserve it. We purchase your products and services, but we ask you to invest in our development. We do not want gifts; we want you to be responsible.”

Young person in Peru, ‘Children’s Participation in CSR’, 2010, Save the Children.



Actions for all business include:

a. Recognizing the core principles underpinning children’s rights

The Convention on the Rights of the Child outlines basic entitlements and freedoms that apply to all children without discrimination, and has four core principles that should underpin any action concerning children, whether taken by governments, parents, communities or the private sector. These four core principles are: *the best interests of the child; non-discrimination; child participation; and survival and development.*

b. Meeting the responsibility to respect children’s rights

This requires avoiding the infringement of children’s rights and addressing any adverse impact on children’s rights with which the business is involved. The corporate responsibility to respect applies to the business’s own activities and to its *business relationships*, including but not limited to those activities and relationships identified in subsequent Principles.

In order to meet this responsibility, all business should put in place appropriate policies and processes, as set out in the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights endorsed by the United Nations Human Rights Council.⁸

These include:

- i. **Policy Commitment:** a statement that sets out the business’s responsibility to respect rights, including children’s rights, as described in the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. A *policy commitment* should be approved at the most senior level of the business and be informed by relevant expertise. It should stipulate the business’s expectations of personnel, business partners and others directly linked to its operations, products or services. It should be publicly available, communicated internally and externally, and embedded in relevant policies and procedures. It may also include a statement of the business’s commitment to support children’s rights.
- ii. **Human Rights Due Diligence:** a business’s ongoing processes for assessing its actual and potential human rights impact, including on children’s rights, integrating and acting upon its findings, tracking its responses and communicating how its impact is addressed. *Human rights due diligence* should cover any adverse impact that the business may cause or contribute to through its own activities, or which may be directly linked to its operations, products or services by a *business relationship*. To carry out *human rights due diligence*, all business should:

Meet their responsibility to respect children’s rights and commit to supporting the human rights of children



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- Identify and assess any actual or potential adverse impact on children’s rights. This should draw on human rights expertise and involve meaningful consultation with children and other potentially affected groups and relevant stakeholders. It should take into account that girls and boys may face different risks.
- Integrate the findings from their impact assessments across relevant internal functions and processes and take appropriate action (as defined in the Guiding Principles). Where a business causes or contributes to an adverse impact on children’s rights, or where it may do so, it should take the necessary steps to cease or prevent the activity, or its contribution to it, and use its leverage to mitigate any remaining impact. Where a business is linked to an adverse impact by a business relationship, it should use its leverage and consider other relevant factors in determining the appropriate action to take.
- Monitor and track the effectiveness of the business’s responses in order to verify whether an adverse impact on children’s rights is being addressed, using appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators and drawing on feedback from internal and external sources, including affected children, families and other stakeholders. The business should consider using tools such as performance contracts and reviews, surveys and audits (self-assessments or independent audits) on a periodic basis.
- Be prepared to communicate externally on their efforts to address the business impact on children’s rights in a form and with the frequency that reflect such an impact and that is accessible to its intended audiences. The business should provide sufficient information to evaluate the adequacy of its responses. Such communication should not pose risks to affected stakeholders, personnel or to legitimate requirements of commercial confidentiality.

⁸ “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations ‘Protect, Respect and Remedy’ Framework” as annexed to the Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, A/HRC/17/31, United Nations, 21 March 2011, available at www.ohchr.org/documents/issues/business/A.HRC.17.31.pdf Endorsed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in A/HRC/RES/17/4.

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ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

Meet their responsibility to respect children's rights and commit to supporting the human rights of children

iii. **Child-sensitive processes to enable Remediation:** the processes to enable *remediation* of any adverse impact on children's rights that the business causes or contributes to. Where a business identifies that it has caused or contributed to an adverse impact on human rights, it should provide for or cooperate in their *remediation* through legitimate processes, including effective operational level grievance mechanisms or judicial mechanisms, as appropriate. Operational level mechanisms should be accessible to girls and boys, their families and those who represent their interests, and meet the effectiveness criteria for non-judicial grievance mechanisms set out in Principle 31 of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

c. Making a commitment to support the human rights of children

In addition to respecting children's rights, business can have a significant role in supporting children's rights throughout their activities and *business relationships*. This may be through core business activities, strategic social investments and philanthropy, advocacy and public policy engagement, and working in partnership or other collective action. Opportunities to support children's rights will often be identified through a business enterprise's *human rights due diligence* processes, including through consultation with children and their families, as well as with appropriate experts in children's rights. Voluntary action in support of children's rights must be in addition to and not a substitute for action taken to respect children's rights, and should be guided by the core principles of child rights.

d. Becoming a champion for children's rights

Business is encouraged to promote children's rights, these Principles and related best business practices, including among suppliers, business partners and peers.



© PLAYING FOR CHANGE

An international apparel company worked with a children and women's rights non-governmental organization (NGO) to set up a grievance access point for local supplier factories in Bangladesh. The NGO had particular expertise working with women and children, and provided a trusted access point to which workers could bring their grievances. It provided an alternative, secure channel that workers could use to contact the apparel company about workplace issues. The system has already provided valuable feedback from workers, and made it easier for the apparel company to engage the supplier factory in remediation.

GOOD PRACTICE:
Establishing an accessible grievance channel

2

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“It is important that businesses work... to better understand human rights and the implications their actions have over people’s lives.”

Young people from Paraguay, Children’s Consultations for the Children’s Rights and Business Principles Initiative, 2011



The corporate responsibility to respect includes respect for the rights in the International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Actions for all business include:

a. Eliminating child labour

Do not employ or use children in any type of *child labour*. Establish robust age-verification mechanisms as part of recruitment processes and ensure that these mechanisms are also used in the *value chain*. Be aware of the presence of all children in the workplace. In removing children from the workplace, measures to ensure protection of affected children, and, where appropriate, *decent work* for adult household members should be pursued. Do not put pressure on suppliers, contractors and subcontractors that are likely to result in abuses of children’s rights.

b. Preventing, identifying and mitigating harm to young workers and protecting them from work that is prohibited for workers under 18 years old or beyond their physical and psychological capacity

Prevent, identify and mitigate harm to *young workers* and protect them from work that is prohibited for workers under 18 years old or beyond their physical and psychological capacity. Protect children from hazardous work, which is likely to harm their health, safety and morals. Prevent and eliminate workplace hazards or remove children from such workplaces. Children in hazardous work should be removed immediately from the source of the hazard and protected against loss of income as a result of such interventions. Be mindful that children of working age may face different risks in the workplace than adults, and that girls may face different risks than boys. Respect, in particular, children’s right to information, freedom of association, collective bargaining, participation, non-discrimination, privacy and protection from all forms of workplace violence – including physical, mental and other humiliating punishment, bullying and sexual abuse.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

c. Working with governments, social partners and others to promote education and sustainable solutions to the root causes of child labour

- i. Work with business peers, communities, child rights organizations, trade unions and governments to promote children’s education and sustainable solutions to the root causes of *child labour*.
- ii. Support broader community, national and international efforts to eliminate *child labour*, including through social mobilization and awareness raising, and programmes to eradicate *child labour* that are designed and carried out in cooperation with local community members and children.
- iii. Work in partnership with other companies, sectoral associations and employers’ organizations to develop an industry-wide approach to address *child labour*, and build bridges with trade unions, law enforcement authorities, labour inspectorates and others.

Contribute towards the elimination of child labour, including in all business activities and business relationships

- iv. Establish or participate in a task force or committee on *child labour* in representative employers’ organizations at the local, state or national level.
- v. Support the development and implementation of a national action plan against *child labour* as part of key policy and institutional mechanisms to combat *child labour* at the national level.
- vi. Participate in programmes to promote youth employment, skills development and job training opportunities for *young workers* above the minimum age for employment.
- vii. Seek to concentrate production in the formal economy and avoid informal working arrangements that may contribute to *child labour*.



A global home furnishings company has developed a comprehensive approach to preventing *child labour* in its supply chain. Suppliers are supported in implementing a corrective action plan if *child labour* is identified, which should take the *child’s best interests* into consideration, including age, family and social situation and level of education. The action plan emphasizes that responses should not merely move *child labour* from one supplier’s workplace to another, they should instead enable more viable and sustainable alternatives for the children involved. Since 2000, the company has developed long-term partnerships with child rights organizations to prevent and eliminate *child labour* in rural communities, including supporting large-scale programmes to create awareness and mobilize local communities around school enrolment drives and improved quality of education, aiming for both boys and girls to finalize their schooling. Another important component is the formation of self-help groups among rural women, helping them to enhance their economic, social and legal status by improving access to credit and income-generating opportunities. This helps to reduce the burden of debt that is one major reason families send their children to work.

GOOD PRACTICE: Addressing the Root Causes of Child Labour

3

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“Pay our parents adequately so that children do not have to drop out of school.”

13-year old boy from India, ‘Children’s Participation in CSR’, 2010, Save the Children.



The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

a. Providing decent work for young workers

Respect the rights of children above the minimum age for work, and promote social dialogue and rights at work, provision of safe working conditions, protection from abuse and exploitation, and access to gender-appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

b. Being responsive to the vulnerability of young workers above the minimum age for work

- i. All business should adopt and endorse, at the highest level, their policy commitment regarding the rights of children and of *young workers*, including their right to be protected from violence and abuse. The policy should protect children above the minimum age for regular work from hazardous work: it should consider, among other things, limits to hours of work; restrictions on work at dangerous heights, as well as work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools; the transport of heavy loads; exposure to hazardous substances or processes, and difficult conditions such as work at night or work where the *young worker* is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.⁹ Responsibility for implementing this policy must be mainstreamed and shared by management, although the business may choose to allocate specific managerial responsibility for supervising its implementation.
- ii. Business policies on harassment should pay attention to the vulnerability of *young workers*. These policies should be enforced consistently and employees and others on company premises should receive training on them. Grievance mechanisms should be effective and also accessible to *young workers*.
- iii. Business may require management and encourage trade unions and their elected representatives to pay special attention to protecting the rights of *young workers*. Trade unions may decide to elect *young worker* representatives/stewards to monitor working conditions of youth; this is a matter for the autonomous decision of the trade union concerned.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

c. Providing decent work for young workers

Promote *decent work* opportunities for *young workers*, including age-appropriate social protection and health information and services. Quality education and relevant vocational training and livelihood development programmes are of particular importance, as is the opportunity to earn a living.

⁹ For further guidance, see International Labour Organization ‘R190 Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation’, 1999, available at <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?R190>

Provide decent work for young workers, parents and caregivers

d. Providing decent working conditions that also support workers, both women and men, in their roles as parents or caregivers

Beyond legal compliance, pay particular attention to working conditions such as the payment of a living wage, length and flexibility of working hours, provisions for pregnant and breastfeeding women, need for parental leave, supporting migrant and seasonal workers with distance parenting, and facilitating access to good quality childcare, health care and education for dependants.



A multinational company based in the United Kingdom partnered with a Chinese women’s NGO in 2009 to provide assistance to the children left behind by migrant worker parents in 10 provinces of China. The initiative is expected to benefit around 600,000 families. Under the programme, parent-to-child telephone cards, known as ‘love cards’ are issued, to facilitate regular communication between migrant workers and their children and families. The programme also provides practical guidance to the families and children who are left at home while parents migrate from rural to urban China for work. Statistics show that there are 58 million children left behind within the country, which accounts for 30 per cent of the total number of children in rural China. More than 40 million of these children are less than 14 years old.

GOOD PRACTICE:
Supporting migrant workers with distance parenting

4

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“In our view, violence committed against a single child is one instance of violence too many.”

Children in West and Central Africa, 2005 (United Nations Study on Violence against Children)

The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

a. Addressing safety and protection risks to children’s rights posed by business facilities and staff in the course of business activities

- i. Ensure that company facilities are not used to abuse, exploit or harm children.
- ii. Ensure that potentially dangerous areas of company facilities do not pose a safety threat to children, during or outside business hours.
- iii. Make clear to staff that the business’s zero tolerance policy for violence, exploitation and abuse applies in all business activities, even when conducted away from business facilities.
- iv. Take appropriate action when concerns of possible violence, exploitation or abuse arise.
- v. Ensure that *young workers* above the minimum age for work are protected from hazardous work.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

b. Developing and implementing a child protection code of conduct

Develop a *child protection code of conduct* for business operations. Ensure awareness of and ongoing training on the code of conduct. Recommend that a *child protection code of conduct* be developed by others linked to the business’s operations, products or services through a *business relationship*.



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Ensure the protection and safety of children in all business activities and facilities



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A global hospitality and travel company has implemented a comprehensive strategy to combat and raise awareness about sexual exploitation and child trafficking. The company is a member of The Code (Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism). As part of their commitment, it requires all suppliers to agree to a legally binding clause in their contracts affirming their denouncement of the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Specialized child protection training has been integrated into employee training programmes. Since late 2011, the company began to issue special advisory notices on electronic travel itineraries issued in the U.S. to specific destinations with a high prevalence of child trafficking and sexual exploitation. Travellers are also provided with a dedicated hotline number to report any instances of sexual exploitation or suspicious behaviour. The company also works to address root causes of the problem through partnerships with community organizations working for the elimination of child trafficking.

GOOD PRACTICE:
Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation

5

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

Monitor not only the sales, but find out who is consuming the product and make efforts to prevent stores from selling harmful products to children.

Young People from the Philippines, Children's Consultations for the Children's Rights and Business Principles Initiative

The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

- a. Ensuring that testing and research of products and services likely to be used or consumed by children is conducted in line with relevant national and international standards.
- b. Ensuring that products and services for children or to which children may be exposed are safe and do not cause mental, moral or physical harm.
- c. Restricting access to products and services that are not suitable for children or that may cause them harm, while ensuring that all such actions align with international standards, including *non-discrimination*, freedom of expression and access to information.
- d. Taking all reasonable steps to eliminate discrimination against any child or group of children in the provision of products and services.
- e. Seeking to prevent and eliminate the risk that products and services could be used to abuse, exploit or otherwise harm children in any way.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

- f. Taking steps to maximize the accessibility and availability of products and services that are essential to children's survival and development.
- g. Seeking opportunities to support children's rights through products and services, as well as their distribution.



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Ensure that products and services are safe, and seek to support children's rights through them



© UNICEF/NYHQ2009-05/76/RANONEDA

An American car manufacturer has given an explicit focus to children in its research. The programme focuses solely on advancing the safety of children, youths and young adults. A multidisciplinary team of paediatricians, psychologists, statisticians, epidemiologists and engineers seeks to better understand the complexities of injury prevention and to translate science into comprehensive, effective interventions that save children's lives. In doing so, the firm is recognizing that children are not just small adults, and that research on adult injury prevention cannot be applied to children. As a result, the programme focuses on the specific needs of children and teens. For example, children are the primary occupants of the second and third rows in vehicles, so automakers need to optimize safety restraints for them.

GOOD PRACTICE:
Focusing on children in auto safety

6

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“We need to foster healthy, realistic self-images. Adults and adolescents must work together to highlight the existing beauty in girls as well as to celebrate other virtues that go beyond body image – such as honesty, intelligence, integrity and generosity”

A 16-year-old girl from Jordan, living in the United States.
State of the World’s Children
2011

The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

a. Ensuring that communications and marketing do not have an adverse impact on children’s rights

This applies to all media outlets and communication tools. Marketing should not reinforce discrimination. Product labelling and information should be clear, accurate and complete, and empower parents and children to make informed decisions. In assessing whether there is or may be an adverse impact on children’s rights and taking action to integrate and act upon the findings, consider factors such as: children’s greater susceptibility to manipulation, and the effects of using unrealistic or sexualized body images and stereotypes.

b. Complying with the standards of business conduct in World Health Assembly instruments related to marketing health¹⁰

Comply with the standards of business conduct in World Health Assembly instruments related to marketing and health in all countries. Where national law prescribes a higher standard, business must follow that standard.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

c. Using marketing that raises awareness of and promotes children’s rights, positive self-esteem, healthy lifestyles and non-violent values



© SAVE THE CHILDREN

Use marketing and advertising that respect and support children’s rights



© UNICEF/NYHQ2010-2463/DORMINO

A European laundry soap brand used its marketing campaign to also create awareness of children’s right to play, the right to express themselves – in short, the right to be a child! It encourages parents to see the value of exploration, play, activity and exercise as critical to children’s development and important for full and healthy lives, even if it means that children get dirty in the process. It has run a series of television commercials in countries all over the world emphasizing the value of play and active lifestyles.

GOOD PRACTICE:
Promoting the right to play and active lives

¹⁰World Health Assembly instruments on marketing and health include: the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes (1981) and subsequent relevant World Health Assembly resolutions (national measures have been adopted in many countries to give effect to both); the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (2003); Set of Recommendations on the Marketing of Foods and Non-Alcoholic Beverages to Children; and the World Health Assembly’s Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol (2010).

7

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

Each year, around three million children under five years old die due to environment-related diseases.

World Health Organization, Global Plan of Action for Children's Health and the Environment (2010 - 2015)

The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

a. Respecting children's rights in relationship to the environment

- i. When planning and implementing environmental and resource-use strategies, ensure that business operations do not adversely affect children's rights, including through damage to the environment or reducing access to natural resources.
- ii. Ensure the rights of children, their families and communities are addressed in contingency plans and remediation for environmental and health damage from business operations, including accidents.

b. Respecting children's rights as an integral part of human rights considerations when acquiring or using land for business operations

- i. Where possible, avoid or minimize displacement of communities affected by land acquisition or land use for business purposes. Engage in meaningful, informed consultation with potentially affected communities to ensure that any adverse impact on children's rights is identified and addressed and that communities participate actively in and contribute to decision-making on matters that affect them directly. Seeking the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples is specifically required for any project that affects their communities, and it is a desirable goal for any community impacted by a company's use or acquisition of land.
- ii. Respect children's rights – especially their right to education, protection, health, adequate food and adequate standard of living and participation – when planning and carrying out resettlement and providing for compensation.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

c. Supporting children's rights in relationship to the environment where future generations will live and grow

Take measures to progressively reduce the emission of greenhouse gases from company operations and promote resource use that is sustainable. Recognize that these actions and other initiatives to better the environment will impact future generations. Identify opportunities to prevent and mitigate disaster risk and support communities in finding ways to adapt to the consequences of climate change.



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Respect and support children's rights in relation to the environment and to land acquisition and use



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A leading Indian company recognized the valuable contributions that schools and schoolchildren – together with youth, parents, teachers, partners and the community at large – can make to help curb excess power usage. As the demand for power in India increases, and energy resources are being rapidly depleted, the company sought to involve youth in an initiative to avert a crippling power crisis. In 2007, it began raising awareness among school children in Mumbai about energy conservation issues and gave them the tools and skills they need to share this information with their families and communities. The initiative has grown to become a national movement involving more than 250 schools and educating more than 1 million citizens.

GOOD PRACTICE:
Schoolchildren learn about energy conservation

8

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“War and politics are always adult games, but children are al-ways the losers.”

Eliza Kantardzic, 17, Bosnia and Herzegovina, United Nations Security Council Meeting on Children and Armed Conflict, 2002

The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

a. Respecting children’s rights in security arrangements

- i. When making and implementing security arrangements, whether with public or private security service providers, conduct human rights due diligence with particular attention to any adverse impact on the rights of children.
- ii. Ensure that respect for the rights of children is explicitly addressed in the business’s security contracts.
- iii. Do not recruit or use children in security arrangements either directly or through private or public security service providers.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

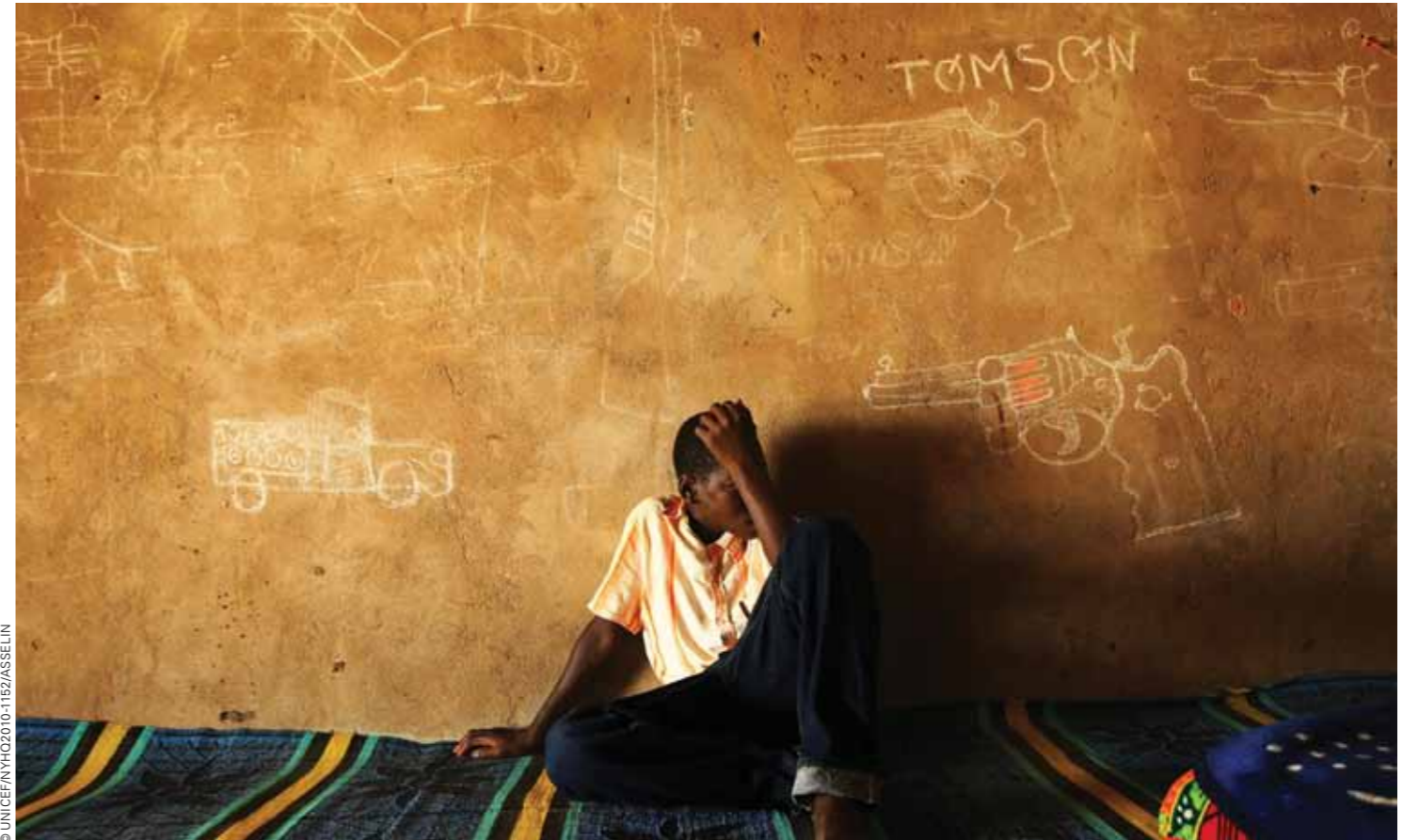
b. Supporting children’s rights in security arrangements

All business is encouraged to apply evolving best practices in the management of security services provided by private contractors or public security forces.



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Respect and support children’s rights in security arrangements



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Established in 2000, the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights – an initiative by governments, non-governmental organizations, and companies – provides guidance to business in the extractive and energy sectors on maintaining the safety and security of their operations within a framework that ensures respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Voluntary Principles are the only human rights guidelines designed specifically for oil, gas and mining companies. They cover three categories: risk assessment, public security and private security. As stated in the Voluntary Principles: “The participants recognize the importance of the promotion and protection of human rights throughout the world and the constructive role business and civil society – including non-governmental organizations, labor/trade unions, and local communities – can play in advancing these goals.”

GOOD PRACTICE:
The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

9

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“Companies should think about emergencies all the time and not only when it happens. This means that companies should have a program to reduce and mitigate damage.”

Young people in Brazil, Children’s Consultations for the Children’s Rights and Business Principles Initiative

The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

a. Respecting children’s rights in the context of emergencies

Avoid causing or contributing to the infringement of children’s rights in the context of *emergencies*. Recognize the heightened human rights risk in the context of armed conflict and other *emergencies*, and undertake *human rights due diligence* accordingly. Take into account that emergencies can significantly increase the risk of any adverse impact on children’s rights, and that certain groups of children may be more vulnerable, including children with disabilities, displaced, migrant, separated and unaccompanied children and indigenous children, and that girls and boys may be affected in different ways.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

b. Supporting the rights of children affected by emergencies

- i. Help protect children whose rights are affected by *emergencies* by raising awareness among workers and community members of the increased risks of violence, abuse and exploitation of children in such contexts.
- ii. Where needed and requested, and in accordance with best practices, support authorities and humanitarian agencies in *emergency* response. Support should be based on assessed need and within a framework of accountability to affected populations.
- iii. Make a positive contribution to sustainable peace and development.¹¹



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Help protect children affected by emergencies



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An international consulting company with project management expertise teamed up with an international organization to bring educational resources to refugee children. A major initiative in this collaboration has been the provision of skills-based education for approximately 30,000 refugee children in eastern Chad. By bringing its management expertise, the business supported the international organisation in defining tangible actions, deliverables and metrics to highlight progress. A key challenge is that ongoing conflict and instability on the ground have made it difficult to establish sustained education programmes and provide children with an appropriate curriculum for a consistent period of time. Programme entry questionnaires seek to identify key child protection concerns to facilitate addressing them as part of the initiative. The company is also helping to raise public awareness on the situation of refugees.

GOOD PRACTICE: Skills-based education for refugee children

¹¹ See for example, the joint United Nations Global Compact - Principles for Responsible Investment publication, ‘Guidance on Responsible Business in Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas: A Resource for Companies and Investors’, 2010. http://www.unglobalcompact.org/Issues/conflict_prevention/guidance_material.html

10

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

“Together we will build a world in which all girls and boys can enjoy childhood – a time of play and learning, in which they are loved, respected and cherished, their rights are promoted and protected, without discrimination of any kind...”

‘A World Fit for Children’, United Nations General Assembly, 11 October 2002

The corporate responsibility to respect includes:

- a. Not undermining government efforts to protect and fulfil children’s rights
Recognize that respect for the rule of law and the use of responsible business practices, including the payment of taxes to generate revenues, are essential for governments to meet their obligations to protect and fulfil children’s rights.

The corporate commitment to support includes:

- b. Supporting government efforts to protect and fulfil children’s rights.
- c. Considering undertaking strategic social investment programmes for children
Contribute to existing programmes or plan and implement social investment programmes in cooperation with governments, civil society and children. Health, education, recreation, child protection and raising awareness of children’s rights have been identified by children and child rights experts as priorities for children.



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Reinforce community and government efforts to protect and fulfil children’s rights



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A leading global financial institution has committed to improving education on a global scale and to supporting efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals to ensure that every child has access to quality basic education. The employees are the cornerstone of the programme’s success. Since the launch in 2005, company employees have donated their time and money to projects for many local children’s initiatives. The financial institution contributes to their efforts by matching all donations. To date, these efforts have contributed US\$13 million for education projects.

GOOD PRACTICE:
Employees support every child’s right to education

Summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

The following text is an unofficial summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The full version of the Convention and its Optional Protocols can be found at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/>

Preamble

The preamble recalls the basic principles of the United Nations and specific provisions of certain relevant human rights treaties and proclamations. It reaffirms the fact that children, because of their vulnerability, need special care and protection, and it places special emphasis on the primary caring and protective responsibility of the family. It also reaffirms the need for legal and other protection of the child before and after birth, the importance of respect for the cultural values of the child's community and the vital role of international cooperation in securing children's rights.

Article 1

Definition of a child. A child is recognized as a person under 18, unless national laws recognize an earlier age of majority.

Article 2

Non-discrimination. All rights apply to all children without exception. It is the State's (national government's) obligation to protect children from any form of discrimination and to take positive action to promote their rights.

Article 3

Best interests of the child. All actions concerning the child shall take full account of his or her best interests. The State shall provide the child with adequate care when parents, or others charged with parental responsibility, fail to do so.

Article 4

Implementation of rights. The State must do all it can to implement the rights contained in the Convention.

Article 5

Parental guidance and the child's evolving capacities. The State must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and the extended family to provide guidance for the child that is appropriate to his or her evolving capacities.

Article 6

Life, survival and development. Every child has the inherent right to life, and the State has an obligation to ensure the child's survival and development.

Article 7

Name and nationality. The child has the right to a name at birth. The child also has the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, to know his or her parents and be cared for by them.

Article 8

Preservation of identity. The State has an obligation to protect and, if necessary, re-establish basic aspects of the child's identity. This includes name, nationality and family ties.

Article 9

Separation from parents. The child has a right to live with his or her parents unless this is deemed incompatible with the child's best interests. The child also has the right to maintain contact with both parents if separated from one or both.

Article 10

Family reunification. Children and their parents have the right to leave any country and to enter their own for purposes of reunion or the maintenance of the child-parent relationship.

Article 11

Illicit transfer and non-return. The State has an obligation to prevent and remedy the kidnapping or retention abroad of children by a parent or third party.

Article 12

Respect of the child's views. The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child.

Article 13

Freedom of expression. The child has the right to express his or her views, obtain information and make ideas or information known, regardless of frontiers.

Article 14

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion. The State shall respect the child's right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, subject to appropriate parental guidance.

Article 15

Freedom of association. Children have a right to meet with others, and to join or form associations.

Article 16

Protection of privacy. Children have the right to protection from interference with their privacy, family, home and correspondence, and to protection from libel or slander.

Article 17

Access to appropriate information. The State shall ensure the accessibility to children of information and material from a diversity of sources, and it shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information that is of social and cultural benefit to the child, and take steps to protect him or her from harmful materials.

Article 18

Parental responsibilities. Parents have joint primary responsibility for raising the child, and the State shall support them in this. The State shall provide parents with appropriate childraising assistance.

Article 19

Protection from abuse and neglect. The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the child's care and shall establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

Article 20

Protection of a child without family. The State is obliged to provide special protection for a child deprived of the family environment and to ensure that appropriate alternative family care or institutional placement is available in such cases. Efforts to meet this obligation shall pay due regard to the child's cultural background.

Article 21

Adoption. In countries where adoption is recognized and/or allowed, it shall be carried out only in the best interests of the child, and then only with the authorization of competent authorities and safeguards for the child.

Article 22

Refugee children. Special protection shall be granted to a refugee child or to a child seeking refugee status. It is the State's obligation to cooperate with competent organizations that provide such protection and assistance.

Article 23

Disabled children. A disabled child has the right to special care, education and training to help him or her enjoy a full and decent life in dignity and achieve the greatest degree of self-reliance and social integration possible.

Article 24

Health and health services. The child has a right to the highest standard of health and medical care attainable. States shall place special emphasis on the reduction of infant and child mortality and on the provision of primary and preventive health care and of public health education. They shall encourage international cooperation in this regard and strive to see that no child is deprived of access to effective health services.

Article 25

Periodic review of placement. A child who is placed by the State for reasons of care, protection or treatment is entitled to have that placement evaluated regularly.

Article 26

Social security. The child has the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance.

Article 27

Standard of living. Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that the child has an adequate standard of living. The State's duty is to ensure that this responsibility can be, and is, fulfilled. State responsibility can include material assistance to parents and their children.

Article 28

Education. The child has a right to education, and the State's duty is to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory, to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child, to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity and to ensure that school discipline is consistent with children's rights and dignity. The State shall engage in international cooperation to implement the right to education.

Article 29

Aims of education. Education shall aim at developing the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent. Education shall prepare the child for an active adult life in a free society and shall foster in the child respect for his or her parents, for his or her own cultural identity, language and values, and for the cultural background and values of others.

Article 30

Children of minorities or indigenous populations. Children of minority communities and indigenous populations have the right to enjoy their own culture and to practise their own religion and language.

Article 31

Leisure, recreation and cultural activities. The child has the right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

Article 32

Child labour. The child has the right to be protected from work that threatens his or her health, education or development. The State shall set minimum ages for employment and shall regulate working conditions.

Article 33

Drug abuse. Children have the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs, and from being involved in their production or distribution.

Article 34

Sexual exploitation. The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

Article 35

Sale, trafficking and abduction. It is the State's obligation to make every effort to prevent the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.

Article 36

Other forms of exploitation. The child has the right to protection from all forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare not covered in articles 32–35.

Article 37

Torture and deprivation of liberty. No child shall be subjected to torture, cruel treatment or punishment, unlawful arrest or deprivation of liberty. Both capital punishment and life imprisonment without the possibility for release are prohibited for offences committed by persons below age 18. Any child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best

interest not to do so. A child who is detained shall have legal and other assistance as well as contact with the family.

Article 38

Armed conflicts. States shall take all feasible measures to ensure that children under 15 years of age have no direct part in hostilities. No child below 15 shall be recruited into the armed forces. States shall also ensure the protection and care of children who are affected by armed conflict as described in relevant international law.

Article 39

Rehabilitative care. The State has an obligation to ensure that child victims of armed conflicts, torture, maltreatment or exploitation receive appropriate treatment for their recovery and social reintegration.

Article 40

Administration of juvenile justice. A child in conflict with the law has the right to treatment that promotes the child's sense of dignity and worth, takes the child's age into account and aims at his or her defence. Judicial proceedings and institutional placements shall be avoided wherever possible.

Article 41

Respect for higher standards. Wherever standards set in applicable national and international law relevant to the rights of the child are higher than those in this Convention, the higher standards shall always apply.

Articles 42–54

Implementation and entry into force. These articles notably foresee:

- the entry into force of the Convention 30 days after its ratification or accession by 20 States;
- States parties' obligation to make the rights of the Convention widely known to both adults and children;
- the establishment of a Committee on the Rights of the Child to consider the reports that States parties are required to submit two years after they have ratified the Convention and every five years thereafter;
- States parties' obligation to submit said reports to the Committee on measures they have taken to fulfil the Convention and the progress being made in their implementation;
- States parties' obligation to make their reports widely known in their own countries;
- international cooperation in the field covered by the Convention achieved by inviting UNICEF and the specialized agencies of the United Nations – such as the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization – along with 'competent' bodies such as non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the UN to attend Committee meetings and provide expert advice on areas within the scope of their activities, and by the Committee's referring to them States Parties' requests for technical advice and assistance;
- the Committee's right to recommend to the General Assembly that special studies be undertaken on specific issues relating to the rights of the child. The rights of the child articulated by the Convention are further reinforced by its Optional Protocols on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

ALL BUSINESS SHOULD →→→

1

Meet their responsibility to respect children's rights and commit to supporting the human rights of children

2

Contribute to the elimination of **child labour**, including in all business activities and business relationships

3

Provide decent work for **young workers, parents and caregivers**

4

Ensure the **protection and safety of children** in all business activities and facilities

5

Ensure that **products and services** are safe, and seek to support children's rights through them

6

Use **marketing and advertising** that respect and support children's rights

7

Respect and support children's rights in relation to the **environment and to land** acquisition and use

8

Respect and support children's rights in **security arrangements**

9

Help protect children affected by **emergencies**

10

Reinforce **community and government efforts** to protect and fulfil children's rights