

EVERY LAST CHILD



Save the Children



The children the world
chooses to forget

SUMMARY

THE WORLD HAS MADE PROGRESS IN IMPROVING CHILDREN'S LIVES – BUT MILLIONS HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED BECAUSE OF WHO THEY ARE OR WHERE THEY LIVE.



Save the Children is calling on world leaders to make three guarantees to all children...



...to ensure basic rights for all children and to reach every last child.



TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE

TO LEARN

TO BE PROTECTED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE WORLD'S FORGOTTEN CHILDREN

Around 16,000 children under five will die today.¹
Around 250 million school-age children – two out of five children – are missing out on learning.²

Which children survive or die, learn or don't, is no accident. It's a result of choices that exclude some groups of children by design or neglect.

We live in a world where the bodies of child refugees are washed up on European beaches, and where an indigenous child can miss out on life-saving healthcare simply because of their heritage. It's a world where a girl can have her access to education denied and her whole future blighted simply because she is a daughter and not a son. It's a world where millions of children with disabilities are missing out on the education that would free them to make the most of their lives.

For nearly a century, Save the Children has been fighting to save children from poverty. Now we are determined to defeat an enemy every bit as deadly and destructive: the discrimination that means millions of children are dying needlessly, being denied the chance to learn or being exposed to violence, just because of who they are.

This report tells the story of these forgotten children and sets out what is required to reach every last child.

THE WORLD MUST RENEW THE BATTLE AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

In our lifetimes, the world has made tremendous progress in the fight against poverty. Since 1990, the number of children dying before their fifth birthday from preventable causes has halved.³ There are 42% fewer children out of primary school than in 2000.⁴ And the number of children who are stunted as a result of malnutrition has fallen by more than a third.⁵

These celebrated achievements have saved and changed millions of lives, but we have not had similar successes in the fight against discrimination. That means that this progress has not been spread fairly among all children.

Extreme poverty continues to be a fatal outrage, but a disproportionate number of children who die or lose out on education are not 'just' poor. Whether they live in a rich country or in one of the world's poorest countries, they tend to experience a combination of poverty and discrimination. Together these two injustices add up to exclusion.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'EXCLUSION'?

The world's forgotten children are excluded groups of children who are not benefiting from recent global progress in social well-being – particularly in health and learning – because of a toxic mix of poverty and discrimination. The discrimination they face can be deliberate or the result of neglect or oversight.

Experiencing a combination of discrimination – any distinction or restriction based on who they

are and where they live and that prevents them enjoying their rights – plus poverty means a child is excluded. That exclusion is stopping millions of children getting the food, healthcare and education they need. What's more, these children and their communities generally have little power to change this and little influence over the decisions that shape their lives.

Exclusion is apparent in every country and for millions of children:

- 400 million children around the world are from ethnic and religious groups that are discriminated against.⁶
- 1 child in 10 lives in a conflict-affected country.⁷
- 150 million children are estimated to be living with a disability.⁸
- 400 million children under 13 live in extreme poverty.⁹
- One quarter of all children we have data on – equivalent to 1.2 billion children in developing countries – are living in a region of their country that has been left behind.¹⁰

Excluded children are disproportionately those left behind.

These are the world's forgotten children and they are both the focus and the heroes of our new campaign.

We are focusing on these children because discrimination is costing and destroying too many lives:

- Two-thirds of families who experience health, nutrition and education poverty in low- and lower middle-income countries are headed by a person from an ethnic minority group.¹¹
- Indigenous groups make up 5% of the global population but 15% of those people in poverty.¹²
- 720 million women were married before they were 18 – compared with 156 million men.¹³
- Girls in the poorest households are less likely to be in school than boys in the poorest households.¹⁴
- Only one in four refugee children of secondary age is in school.¹⁵
- Children with disabilities are 3–4 times more likely to experience physical and sexual violence and neglect than their peers.¹⁶

As well as hurting millions of children, the economic and social impacts of these forms of discrimination are profound. Exclusion undermines trust, community cohesion, economic growth and peace.

NEW FINDINGS ON EXCLUDED CHILDREN

Our **Child Development Index (CDI)** reveals the wide inequalities in life chances that children across the globe experience today simply because of who they are. It measures key indicators of a fair start in life, allowing us to rank countries – and, more importantly, groups within countries – according to children's life chances. Emerging inequalities are striking. In the Republic of Congo, disparities between ethnic groups are as large as differences between average outcomes in Egypt and Somalia. In Peru, a middle-income country, indigenous Quechua children have life chances equivalent to the average for children in the Gambia, a poor country. In Mozambique, disparities are as large as the differences between average outcomes in Chad and Indonesia.

In this report, we use newly computed data on ethnicity, regions within countries and gender from our **Groups-based Inequality Database (GRID)**. This database contains statistics on human development outcomes computed from direct data processing of 280 household surveys and a large compilation of aggregated public sources. We used GRID to compute the

Child Development Index and to undertake a series of new analyses, including how the situation is evolving over time. We found that more than half of countries from our sample have seen an increase in inequality in life chances between ethnic groups and regions within countries.

Unfortunately, lack of data remains one of the challenges with excluded groups, as they also remain invisible to statistics. Our analysis was complemented with estimations based on **secondary data**.

The report also benefits from in-depth analysis undertaken in 28 countries where we work. Save the Children experts, working on the ground with the most excluded groups, produced a series of Country Spotlights, with rich evidence that helps to understand specific country contexts and the drivers behind the vast inequalities in children's outcomes. Evidence from their analysis was complemented with case studies of individual children and parents who benefited from Save the Children programmes.

IN MANY COUNTRIES IT'S GETTING WORSE

It might be tempting to dismiss some of these problems as simply 'unfinished business', injustices that will be rectified as poverty is eliminated. In fact, the impact of exclusion on life chances is becoming **more**, not less, important.¹⁷

Our findings, based on new data analysis, show that inequalities in life chances between excluded ethnic groups and others are worsening in the majority of countries for which data is available. Our research found that, more than 20 years after the end of apartheid and more than 60 years after the birth of the American civil rights movement, ethnicity is still important in defining life outcomes in every corner of the globe. For example, Quechua children in Peru are 1.6 times more likely to die before their fifth birthday and more than twice as likely to be stunted as children from a Spanish-speaking background. In Ghana, Gruma children were about twice as likely to be stunted as more advantaged groups in 1998; this gap had grown to nearly 3.5 more likely by 2014. In the majority of countries, inequalities are getting worse and excluded ethnic groups are being left behind.

Our analysis also shows that inequalities in life chances between regions within countries are growing for the majority of cases with available data. Where a child lives in a country can be as important as which country they are born in. For example, our Child Development Index shows that in Burkina Faso children living in the Sahel region have lower life chances than children living in Chad (a poorer country) – whereas children from the capital region of Ouagadougou are on a par with the average for children in Indonesia. In most countries, these inequalities in life chances are increasing. For example, in Benin children in the most deprived region of Alibori made slower progress and dropped further behind despite important improvements for the country as a whole.

At the same time, the number of child refugees is on the rise, with 2014 seeing the highest number of child refugees in over a decade. In 2011 children made up 46% of refugees worldwide; in 2014 that rose to 51%.¹⁸ And 2014 saw the highest number of displaced people on record – 59.5 million – with a staggering 8.3 million more people displaced than in 2013. Over half of those internally displaced are children.¹⁹

It is not enough to blame mismanagement or bad luck. The enduring nature of these disparities signal at best gross neglect and at worst profound and deep-seated discrimination.

WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE

Without urgent action to tackle exclusion, progress in tackling poverty will slow and may even halt altogether.

In 2015 world leaders agreed a new set of Global Goals (the Sustainable Development Goals or 'SDGs'), which give the world shared targets to end poverty once and for all. In agreeing the goals they promised to 'leave no-one behind'. We share those ambitions and applaud those world leaders who pushed for bold commitments. But we know these goals can't be achieved without ending discrimination against excluded groups. Focusing on poverty alone won't be enough.

In recent years the world has rightly begun to challenge income and wealth inequalities. But what's needed now is a similar focus on how to tackle inequalities in life chances between girls and boys, between different ethnic groups and between different regions, and to address all forms of identity-based inequality. The exclusion of children because of who they are or where they live is a choice, with actors responsible at every level.

- Exclusion is **experienced at the household level** – when the decision about whether a boy or girl goes to school is based on the family's income, the child's gender, or their disability status.
- Exclusion is **reinforced at the local level** – with certain groups penalised, and local schools and health clinics failing to provide inclusive services.
- Exclusion is **institutionalised at the national level**, with the voices and experiences of excluded children and their communities ignored, and a lack of resources to ensure every child survives and thrives.
- And, despite important norms and conventions set by the United Nations and agreed by most countries, this injustice is too often **under-written at the international level** by a failure to give developing countries their fair share of global taxes and aid, and a failure to ensure the rights of all excluded children are realised.

TABLE I THREE GUARANTEES TO ALL CHILDREN

1. Fair finance	2. Equal treatment	3. Accountability
Increased public revenue, collected and spent equitably, and supported internationally	Laws and policies to remove discriminatory barriers to services	Better data disaggregation
Remove cost barriers to services	Public campaigns to challenge norms and behaviours	Governance at all levels includes children
Minimum financial security for all children	Every birth registered	Budget transparency and monitoring

A FAIR CHANCE FOR ALL CHILDREN

While the barriers faced by excluded children are high, they are not inevitable. They are the result of human choices, and human choices can help tear them down. To overcome the financial, discriminatory and accountability barriers to inclusion, we're calling on leaders across the world to make **Three Guarantees to All Children**:

1. Fair finance – sustainable financing of and free access to essential services

Public investment in good-quality and equitable essential services must be increased and improved. Universal essential services will help all children, but they will help excluded children the most.

2. Equal treatment – end discriminatory policies, norms and behaviours

Discriminatory norms must change, and legal and policy barriers be removed (for instance, those that tolerate and perpetuate violence in schools and child marriage).

3. Accountability of decision-makers – to children, their families and communities

Greater participation of excluded groups – including children – in policy-making and budget allocation must be ensured.

These Guarantees are demands we make of decision-makers everywhere on behalf of all children everywhere. Small steps won't end exclusion: these Guarantees must be delivered to every last child.

SAVE THE CHILDREN'S GLOBAL CAMPAIGN

We know what needs to be done to ensure that no child gets left behind simply because they are a girl, or from an ethnic group that is discriminated against, or have a disability, or are displaced by conflict or living in the 'wrong' place. This report sets out Save the Children's ambition to help end exclusion – and urges leaders from around the world to join us in doing whatever it takes to reach every last child.

Over the next three years Save the Children will do whatever it takes to help ensure that every last child survives and thrives. We will work directly with excluded children, coming up with innovative solutions and programmatic approaches. We will challenge the laws, norms and policies that have allowed poverty and discrimination to persist. And we will campaign with and for the world's forgotten children.

This task could not be more urgent. The narrow, exclusionary world we live in today is not the world we should be building for our children. With your help we can build one in which no child's chances are determined by who they are or where they were born. Together we can end exclusion.

Together we can reach every last child.

THE STORY IN NUMBERS

Children from excluded groups are being left behind across the globe.

400 million children from ethnic and religious groups are discriminated against according to our estimations.¹

One quarter of all children we have data on – equivalent to 1.2 billion children in developing countries – are living in a region of their country that's been left behind.²

117 million women were missing from the global population in 2010 largely due to pre-natal sex selection.³

720 million women were married before they were 18 – compared with 156 million men.⁴

1 in 4 refugee children of secondary age are estimated to be in school⁵ compared with 3 in 4 children worldwide.⁶

5% of the global population are from indigenous groups but they make up **15%** of those people in poverty.⁷

There's a **3–4 times** greater likelihood that children with disabilities will experience physical and sexual violence and neglect than their peers.⁸

And it's getting worse.

More than half of countries for which data is available have seen an increase in inequality in life chances between ethnic groups and between regions within countries since the 2000s according to our new research.⁹

Two-thirds of families who lack good health, nutrition and education poverty are from a minority ethnic group.¹⁰

42,500 people a day fled their homes in 2014, a **fourfold** increase from 2010.¹¹

17 years: the average length of time refugees spend uprooted from their homes.¹²

But things can get better.

30% increase in the number of children immunised in the Ayacucho region of Peru after receiving cash transfers.¹³

More than 90% of Rwanda's population was covered by the national health insurance system in its first decade.¹⁴

50% reduction in gender inequalities in child mortality has been achieved in Bangladesh in the last two decades.¹⁵

91% of girls worldwide completed primary school as of 2013, up from 78% in 2000 and nearing boys' completion rate of 93%.¹⁶

NOTES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

¹ UN Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (2015) Estimates for child mortality. <http://www.childmortality.org/>

² UNESCO (2014) *Around 250 million children of primary school-age are not reaching a minimum learning standard*. Technical note prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/2014. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002287/228723E.pdf>

³ UN Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (2015) *Estimates for child mortality*. <http://www.childmortality.org/>

⁴ UNESCO (2014) Global progress towards universal primary education has halted. <http://www.uis.unesco.org/FactSheets/Documents/fs-28-out-of-school-children-en.pdf>

⁵ Only between 1990 and 2010 the global figure reduced to a third, see: De Onis, M., Blossner, M. and Borghi, E. (2012) Prevalence and trends of stunting among pre-school children, 1990–2020. http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/publications/stunting1990_2020/en/

⁶ Own estimations based on the Minorities at Risk database (<http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/about.asp>) and UN population statistics.

⁷ UNICEF (2014) *More than 1 in 10 Children Living in Countries and Areas Affected by Armed Conflict*. <https://www.unicefusa.org/press/releases/unicef-more-1-10-children-living-countries-and-areas-affected-armed-conflict/21551>

⁸ UNICEF (2006). *The State of the World's Children*. http://www.unicef.org/sowc06/pdfs/sowc06_fullreport.pdf

⁹ Olinto, P., Beegle, K. Sobrado, C. & H. Uematsu (2013). *The State of the Poor: Where are the poor, where is extreme poverty harder to end, and what is the current profile of the world's poor?* <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTPREMNET/Resources/EPI25.pdf>

¹⁰ This is 1.2 billion out of 2.2 billion children living in developing countries based on population estimates from 2014. Figures correspond to own analysis based on Save the Children Groups-based Inequality Database.

¹¹ Sumner, A. (2012). *The New Face of Poverty: How has the Composition of Poverty in Low Income and Lower Middle Income Countries (excluding China) Changed since the 1990s?* IDS Working Paper No 408. <https://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/Wp408.pdf>

¹² IFAD (n.d.). *Rural Poverty Portal: Indigenous people and rural poverty*. http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/topic/home/tags/indigenous_peoples

¹³ UNICEF (2014). *Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects*. UNICEF, New York. http://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR..pdf

¹⁴ Own calculations. See endnote 9 in The Story in Numbers.

¹⁵ The World Bank Group (2016) Gross enrolment ratio, secondary, both sexes (%). <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.ENRR/countries?display=graph>

¹⁶ Jones, L., Bellis, M.A., Wood, S., Hughes, K., McCoy, E., Eckley, L., Bates, G., Mikton, C., Shakespeare, T., Officer, A. (2012) 'Prevalence and risk of violence against children with disabilities: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies'. *The Lancet*, Vol. 380, No. 9845

¹⁷ Own calculation based on Save the Children Groups-based Inequality Database (GRID) and analysis on the Child Development Index (CDI).

¹⁸ UNHCR. (2014). *UNHCR Global Trends, Forced Displacement in 2014, World at War*. <http://unhcr.org/556725e69.html>

¹⁹ UN News Centre (2015). *2015 'year of fear' for children, UN education envoy says, urging school funding in crisis*. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=50929-.VrX9XS4nzct>

THE STORY IN NUMBERS

¹ Calculated using the Minorities at Risk database (<http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/about.asp>) and UN population statistics.

² This is 1.12 billion out of 2.2 billion children living in developing countries based on population estimates from 2014. Figures correspond to own analysis based on Save the Children Group Based Inequality Database.

³ UNFPA (2012). *Sex Imbalances at Birth: Current trends, consequences and policy implications*. <http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Sex%20Imbalances%20at%20Birth.%20PDF%20UNFPA%20APRO%20publication%202012.pdf>

⁴ UNICEF (2014). *Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects*. UNICEF, New York. http://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR..pdf

⁵ UNHCR (2016). *Education*. <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cda.html>

⁶ The World Bank Group (2016) Gross enrolment ratio, secondary, both sexes (%). <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.ENRR/countries?display=graph>

⁷ IFAD (n.d.). *Rural Poverty Portal: Indigenous people and rural poverty*. http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/topic/home/tags/indigenous_peoples

⁸ Jones, L., Bellis, M.A., Wood, S., Hughes, K., McCoy, E., Eckley, L., Bates, G., Mikton, C., Shakespeare, T., Officer, A. (2012) 'Prevalence and risk of violence against children with disabilities: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies'. *The Lancet*, Vol. 380, No. 9845

⁹ Own calculations based on Save the Children's Groups-based Inequality Database (GRID).

¹⁰ Sumner, A. (2012). *The New Face of Poverty: How has the Composition of Poverty in Low Income and Lower Middle Income Countries (excluding China) Changed since the 1990s?* IDS Working Paper No 408. <https://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/Wp408.pdf>

¹¹ UNHCR. (2014). *UNHCR Global Trends, Forced Displacement in 2014, World at War*. <http://unhcr.org/556725e69.html>

¹² Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (2004). *Protracted Refugee Situations*. Standing Committee 30th Meeting. <http://www.unhcr.org/40ed5b384.html>

¹³ Jones, N., with Vargas, R. and Villar, E. (2008) 'Cash transfers to tackle childhood poverty and vulnerability: an analysis of Peru's Juntos programme', *Environment and Urbanization*, 20(1), 2008, pp 255–273 p. 264.

¹⁴ Makaka, A., Breen, S & A. Binagwaho (2012). 'Universal health coverage in Rwanda: a report on innovations to increase enrolment in community-based health insurance'. *The Lancet*. Vol 380, Special Issue, S7.

¹⁵ Save the Children (2015). *The Lottery of birth: Giving all children an equal chance to survive*. <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/lottery-birth>

¹⁶ The World Bank Group (2016). *World Development*. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.CMPT.FE.ZS>

Cover photo: Sawda, 13, attends catch-up classes at a camp for Somali refugees in Ethiopia.

(Photo: Jonathan Hyams/Save the Children)

Save the Children works in more than 120 countries. We save children's lives. We fight for their rights. We help them achieve their potential.

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