



# CRIN NEWSLETTER

Child Rights Information Network Number 18 / March 2005

## Rights Based Programming with Children: an introduction

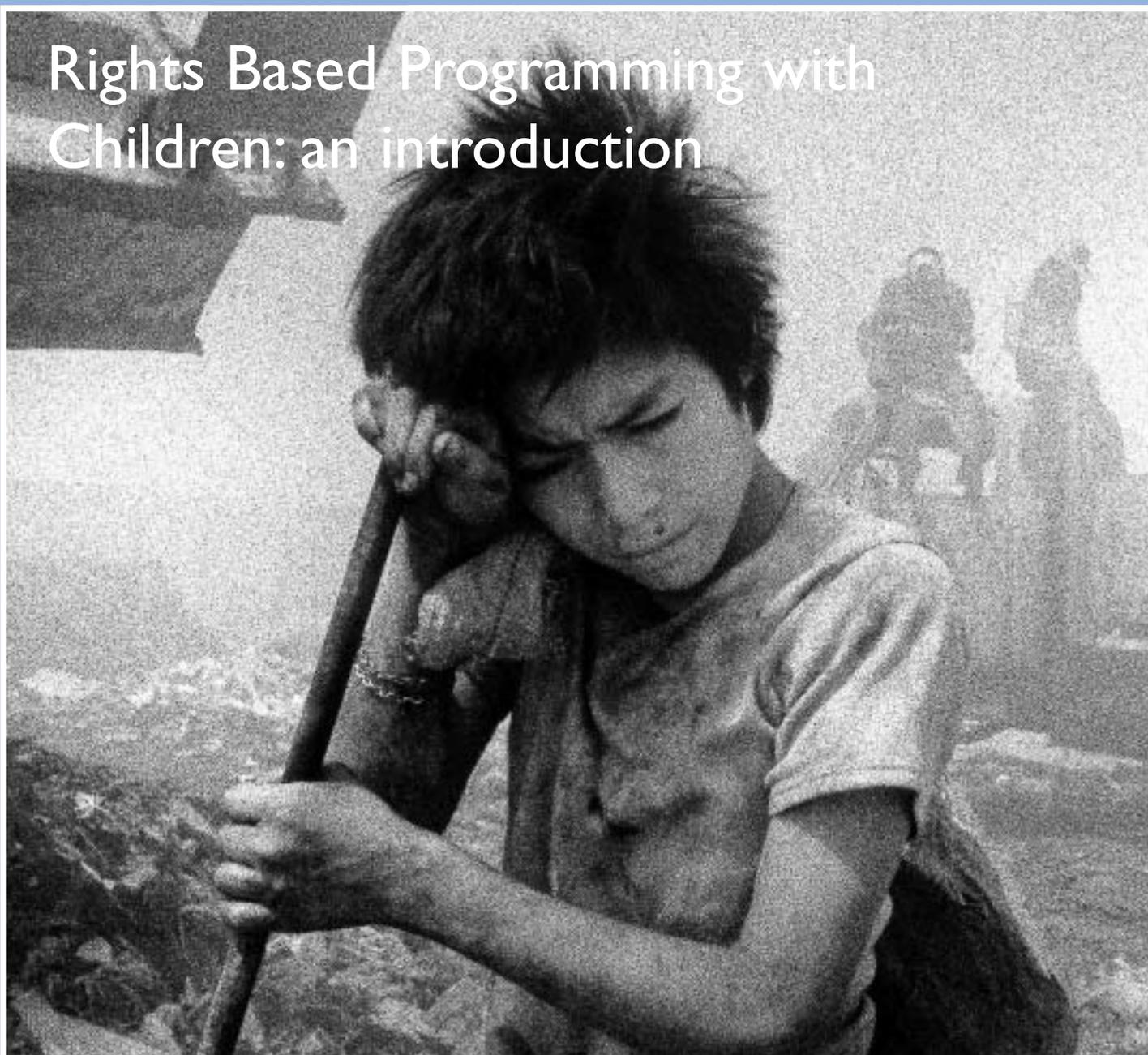


Photo: Fernando Moleres/Panos Pictures

### Featuring:

**Where we are now** *Guy Cave on the development of rights based programming*

**Turning tides** *Laure-Hélène Piron on new moves from bilateral aid agencies*

**Just another fad?** *Joachim Theis outlines major obstacles to overcome in rights based approaches*

The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) is a membership-driven organisation and network of over 1,500 child rights organisations around the world. It strives to improve the lives of children through the exchange of information about child rights and the promotion of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Introducing the CD Rom

Child rights, and human rights in general, occupy an increasingly important place in the development agenda. In the last few years we have witnessed a growing convergence in thinking and practice between work on human rights, development and humanitarian assistance, which gave birth to the concept of rights based programming.

As a relatively new approach to programming, the rights based approach has attracted considerable interest in the wider development and relief community, and prompted the need for a global information exchange on lessons learned in the introduction of such approaches as well as in the emergence of new directions in this work.

Responding to this new information need, CRIN initiated its human rights based project in 2003. The purpose of the project was to bring information about rights based programming together under one roof in order to provide not only a unique set of resources but also a forum in which evolving ideas can be shared and tested with the community of child rights practitioners.

Since the start of the project, CRIN has produced a rights based programming website, an email bulletin (Rights CRINMAIL), an online discussion forum, this thematic newsletter (available in English, French and Spanish) and the attached CD Rom, which contains some of the key resources available on the website.

As well as being of interest to the wider development and relief community, the Rights Approach website ([www.therightsapproach.org](http://www.therightsapproach.org)) will also support the

mainstreaming of rights based approaches among the network of agencies and partners involved in different thematic areas of work.

Contents of the CD Rom include:

- **The Guide**, an introduction to rights based programming for those new to the area, which contains the following sections: what is rights based programming?; rights and development; the international framework for human rights; how to do rights based programming including tools and resources; a questions and answers section and a glossary. The Guide is available in English, French and Spanish.

- **A catalogue of over 100 documents** with extended summaries and catalogued according to document types (training and “how to”; analysis and discussion; reviews and evaluations; human rights references; links) and themes (overviews; budgets; children; education; emergencies; gender; health; HIV/AIDS; monitoring and evaluation; participation; poverty and livelihoods; water). The CD has sections on other resources available in French and Spanish.

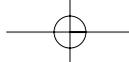
- **The articles of this newsletter** are also available on the CD. French and Spanish versions of the Newsletter will be available at [www.crin.org/about/newsletter.asp](http://www.crin.org/about/newsletter.asp)

We hope that this CD Rom will be useful to your work.

*We have a limited number of copies, but are planning to re-print an updated version next year.*

**Cover illustration:** Guatemala City, GUATEMALA

Child labour: Dozens of abandoned street kids live and work in the city's huge rubbish dump, collecting materials which can be reused. Most of them are addicted to glue.



# CRIN Newsletter Number 18

*Rights Based Programming with Children: an introduction*

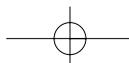
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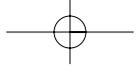
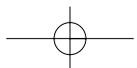
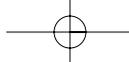


Photo: Mike Goldwater/Network





## Editorial

The issues surrounding human rights based approaches are issues that concern and affect the entire development and relief community. More and more organisations are looking with interest in that direction. But what is it and what does it mean for organisations to adopt rights based approaches to programming?

In response to a new information need, CRIN started work on rights based approaches in 2004 by developing a new web resource containing a collection of key publications on the subject. This Newsletter and its accompanying CD Rom aim to complement the website by offering an introduction to rights based programming.

The shift to rights based programming is one of the most fundamental ones the development and relief community has undertaken recently. At the core of it lies the belief that taking such an approach has many advantages and will make programming more effective, reduce injustice and achieve greater equality between people. However, no one should underestimate the challenges in this process.

For those not familiar with rights based approaches, this edition of the newsletter starts with the basic introduction, including a Questions and Answers section, a glossary of key human rights terms and reviews of some of the essential readings on the subject.

Guy Cave's article is a clear introduction to the topic offering a historical background and an explanation of what it actually means to take a rights based approach to programming.

How are organisations affected by this shift? We look at four international non-governmental organisations (Care, Plan International, Save the Children and UNICEF) that decided to go down that road and see how this affected their work. An overview of the UN Common Understanding gives us an insight into how the UN development system is attempting to mainstream human rights into its activities and programmes. Laure-Hélène Piron then reveals the reasons, both internal and external, why some major donors are faster than others to follow this trail.

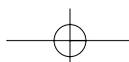
How does rights based programming work on the ground? We feature two regional overviews, from Latin America and South Asia, describing the general

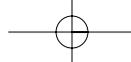
context for rights based programming and two case studies of projects that have emerged.

While this newsletter may seem to mainly look at the advantages of rights based programming, we do not shy away from the possible disadvantages either. While there is a developing consensus that rights based programming is the way forward, there are, of course, concerns, challenges and caveats that remain. An article by Joachim Theis offers an in-depth look at the challenges – past present and future, while Maïsha Frost looks at concerns from some of the most convinced supporters of rights based programming.

As this newsletter addresses both the theory and the practice, we are hoping that it will shed light on this issue and will serve as a valuable reference guide in your work.

Veronica Yates





## Where we are now

*An overview of the development of rights based programming from Save the Children UK's Child Rights Programming Adviser Guy Cave*

The United Nations states that human rights, justice, peace and the goals of development are inextricably linked.

In 1997 Kofi Annan called for human rights to be integrated into the work of all UN agencies, and six years later those agencies agreed a common interpretation of a human rights based approach. Some governmental donors and an increasing number of NGOs have also explicitly adopted human rights as the basis for their work.

So the fields of human rights and development have been recognised as being interrelated. However the legal treaties that enshrine internationally recognised human rights have been described as a 'manifesto' – full of utopian wishes that have little hope of being realised.

So what does it actually mean to take a rights based approach to development work? Mary Robinson summed it up well when she said:

"The rights based approach ... means describing situations not in terms of human needs, or areas for development, but in terms of the obligation to respond to the rights of individuals. This empowers people to demand justice as a right, and not as charity. And legitimising those demands provides balance against other, less positive, forces. This also implies the direct involvement of people in decisions relating to their own development. Internationally, a rights-based approach provides the community with a sound moral basis on which to claim assistance and to advocate a world economic order respectful of human rights."

Essentially to take a rights based approach (RBA) to development means to view the realisation of all human rights as the end goal of development, and to accept that human rights standards and principles also show the means by which this goal should be achieved. In a rights based approach issues such as accountability, participation, empowerment, equity and non-discrimination become central.

It has been said that the defining attribute of a RBA is that it introduces accountability into development. For every right people have, some institution, group or person can be identified as having the responsibility for fulfilling this right. While the ultimate responsibility for the realisation of human

rights rests with State Parties, the RBA also implies that all non-State actors, including NGOs, can also be held accountable for the actions they take which may enhance realisation of rights, or indeed have the opposite effect. With this introduction of accountability into development, power and an understanding of power relations become important.

The poor, the marginalised, and the oppressed can now know that they have rightful claims to improve their situation, and as such a RBA focuses on the empowerment of these groups.

Human rights are universal. Within a RBA they lead to a focus on those who suffer the most from having their rights violated.

But in the general debate about RBA, children are often overlooked. However several factors favour child-focused development actors adopting a human rights based approach to programming. The comprehensiveness of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child makes it a good foundation for a rights based approach and its almost universal ratification has also been helpful in this respect.

Another positive contributing factor is the Committee on the Rights of the Child, one of the more forward-thinking treaty bodies, which is willing to involve and listen to UNICEF and NGOs. At its first session the Committee defined four principles from the articles of the UNCRC (see below) that should be applied in interpreting children's rights in any situation. These gave child-focused development actors four principles to apply in their work, along with the general human rights ones of universality, inalienability, interdependence and indivisibility of rights.

### Child rights situation analysis

Programmes are a useful starting point for determining where a child rights based approach differs from previous ones.

The first stage involves mapping the child rights situation in a country, identifying violations and gaps in provision compared with the rights included in the UNCRC. This ensures a comprehensive, holistic overview. Because children are seen as social actors this analysis should include the extent of the realisation of their participation rights, and children

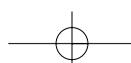




Photo: Anna Kari

themselves must be listened to in the analysis. The principle of non-discrimination requires that we have a particular concern for the situation of the most vulnerable and excluded children.

A child rights situation analysis also involves attempting to understand the immediate and root causes of the identified violations of children's rights. A RBA aims to deal with root causes so that the situation can be changed permanently.

One of the distinguishing factors of a child rights based approach is that the analysis identifies who the duty bearers are in relation to any particular right (i.e. those responsible for fulfilling it). This is based on the principle of accountability. Attention also needs to be paid to their capacity (e.g. financially or in terms of skilled personnel) to deliver that right.

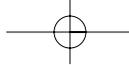
### **Accountability**

Ultimately the realisation of children's rights relies on national and international political will. A rights based approach attempts to make governments accountable

for their legal obligations under the Convention. Accountability is fundamental to any rights based approach, and there are claims and obligations involved in the realisation of a right. Temporary fulfilment is not enough, the aim is to realise a right with the social and legal guarantees of continuity.

In programme terms this means that service delivery alone is insufficient: root causes of violations must be dealt with and the establishment of rights must be on a sustainable basis. This may require advocating changes in policy and practice or strengthening mechanisms such as a children's ombudsperson. It will also involve building civil society's capacity to support children's rights, and empowering children to claim their rights.

The shift to a child rights based approach to programming also requires that child-focused organisations improve their own accountability to children. This might be done by listening to children about the impact the organisation's work has actually had on their lives, and involving children in decision-making.



### The four principles of the UNCRC

It is important to consider the four principles of the UNCRC at every stage of the programme cycle. The principle of survival and development is fundamental, and it is important to note that the concept of child development in the UNCRC is a very comprehensive and holistic one.

The best interests of the child (article 3.1) stresses children must be seen as human beings in their own right. It has also been successfully used to get children's rights on to decision-makers' agendas, and has served as a basis for evaluating laws, policies, practices, and budget decisions.

The principle of non-discrimination (article 2) has numerous implications in practice. While child rights based development actors are concerned with the rights of all children, they tend to give priority to the most disadvantaged children. In programming, the non-discrimination principle not only helps in identifying the target groups of any intervention, but also concentrates thinking about how the intervention will include and affect different groups of children, bearing in mind that no one is defined by just one aspect of their identity, and children can sometimes suffer multiple discrimination. A right cannot be said to be realised until everyone enjoys it.

Participation is not only a general principle in the UNCRC; it is also a principle of human rights.

Children's participation rights are best thought of as a cluster, including article 12 (respect for children's views); article 13 (the right to freedom of expression); article 14 (the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion); article 15 (the right of the child to freedom of association and to peaceful assembly); and article 17 (the right of the child to access appropriate information).

Children's participation is both an end and a means. It is a good in itself, but it also empowers children to achieve other rights and change their status in a society. The violation of participation rights is a root cause of the violation of other rights – for example, if children do not have access to appropriate information they are more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

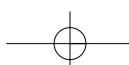
A child rights based approach provides an overall framework (based on the UNCRC) for all programming with children. Within this the UNCRC reporting process can be used as a tool, creating opportunities for awareness-raising, advocacy, national coalition creation or development, etc.

A RBA is not a magic solution to all the problems in development. However it has many benefits for child-focused development actors, though it may require a significant change in the way they work, and in some of the issues they work on.

Guy Cave, Child Rights Programming Adviser, Save the Children.  
Contact: [g.cave@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:g.cave@savethechildren.org.uk)



Photo: Stuart Freedman/Network Photographers



# Factfile

*Frequently asked questions about rights based programming*

## What are human rights?

Human rights underpin all rights-based programming. These are universal and entitle all people to basic conditions supporting their efforts to live in peace and dignity and to develop their full potential as human beings. No human rights are conditional upon any behaviour, save that we should respect each other's human rights.

## What is it?

A rights-based approach to programming deliberately and explicitly focuses on people realising their human rights. Therefore issues such as accountability, participation, empowerment, justice and non-discrimination become central both to the aims and process of programming. The overall purpose is to create lasting solutions that stand a far greater chance of succeeding because they are based on realising people's rights. With this approach human rights are both the end and the means of development. The United Nations states that human rights, justice, peace and the goals of development are all linked.

## What is the difference between rights and needs?

Rights generate duties and responsibilities, whereas needs do not. Rights imply objective standards against which responsibilities can be measured, needs do not necessarily require this. Responding to needs is often seen as a charitable approach in which people depend on compassion or good will rather than a legally enforceable claim.

## How does a rights' perspective change the way we view our work?

A rights' perspective requires us to view our beneficiaries as rights-bearers who, because they are human beings, can claim minimum levels of treatment, services and opportunity, and who exist in a wider context – a society – within which such claims are either respected or ignored. A rights based approach demands work is viewed in this broader context.

## How and when did rights based programming emerge?

There were a variety of reasons:

1. In the 1990s disillusionment with the ineffectiveness of some development programmes set in. Until then development had largely been focused on economic development. Acknowledgement of the importance of social and cultural development paved the way for a shift towards rights based programming as delivering more effective and lasting solutions as it actively engages those it is seeking to help.
2. The end of the Cold War made the full range of rights a common goal for the international community.
3. In 1997 the UN launched its Programme for Reform when the Secretary-General called on all entities to mainstream human rights into their various activities and programmes within the framework of their respective mandates. This has spearheaded the move to RBA which has now been taken up with varying degrees of speed by NGOs and donor organisations.

## Who is introducing it?

A variety of UN agencies, NGOs, bilateral donor agencies have decided to take up the challenge of RBAs.

## Is it just for big organisations?

No, it is for organisations of all sizes, but introducing RBA needs time, patience and the backing of all those involved. This may also increase costs in the short term. It also puts new demands on partnerships – if one NGO has introduced RBA, working with another who has not adopted this approach could be increasingly difficult.

## What do donors think of it?

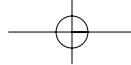
Donors have varied in their eagerness or concern about adopting RBAs. In Sweden the tradition of social democracy hastened its implementation, in Switzerland it was the Rwandan genocide – the country had been a long time donor and was appalled at its inability to foresee the conflict. In other donor countries, a range of factors have played a part in delaying adoption such as political opposition, concerns that RBA creates technical problems, a view that it is already being practised although not in name, and finally a belief that it is unrealistic.

**What about children and RBA?**

Children's rights, enshrined in the CRC, are concerned both with the protection of the individual child and with the creation of the conditions in which all children can develop to their full potential. They call upon adults to ensure these are fulfilled. In the general RBA debate children's special case can sometimes be overlooked. There are many inherent advantages in child-focused development and relief organisations adopting RBA. For example, the Convention and its near-universal ratification is a good foundation, NGOs are listened to by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and child-focused development organisations have clear principles as a framework assisting their move to RBA: the best interest of the child, non-discrimination, and participation. Participation is both an end and a means, a good in itself, it empowers children to achieve other rights and change their status in society.

**What are the problems?**

Time, the willingness of staff to adopt new methods, concerns about increased politicisation may all be seen as obstacles to adopting RBAs. RBA may or may not involve entering into opposition with those who hold the power to deny rights, through denouncements of violators, legal enforcement and promoting collaborative ways. There have also been doubts cast on its long term future: is it just the latest development fad and a utopian dream with no chance of becoming mainstream practice?



## Finding the RBA way – four international views

Whether the organisation is large or small, changing to a rights based approach is never going to be easy. Here four international organisations describe the ups and downs of what is a process very much still in development. Their experiences will certainly help others embarking on the process as 'there is no quick fix to suit everyone', says Bill Bell, Head of Child Rights and Protection at Save the Children, who introduces this overview.

### Introduction

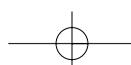
How does a development organisation become more rights based? This is the issue that has confronted the four organisations discussed in this article – Plan, UNICEF, Care, and Save the Children. At varying levels and to different degrees these organisations have taken steps to base their programmes on human rights principles and standards. The four case studies demonstrate the range of ways in which this task can be approached – they also show that no one way seems to be necessarily more effective than any other.

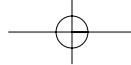
All the organisations face the same challenges. For example, rights based approaches are still in the process of development and for that reason there is no simple recipe that will explain exactly what they are. This has inevitably created a degree of scepticism from many relief and development workers about the value of making a significant investment in rethinking their approach to programming. The language of rights is an unfamiliar one and rights based approaches could turn out to be just another fashion or short-lived novelty. Externally, the organisations have found that their new approach has been greeted with varying degrees of enthusiasm or scepticism by their traditional partners and donors.

The case studies explain how the different organisations have approached these challenges. To some extent these stories reflect the different mandates and distinct histories of the four organisations. But key common responses also emerge. Firstly, they have all allowed a degree of diversity in how different regions and parts of the organisation have interpreted rights based approaches. Secondly, they have recognised that the



Photo: Anna Kari





implementation of rights based approaches will not happen overnight and have tried to allow enough time to ensure a good understanding and ownership of the new approach. Thirdly, they have tried to provide a range of support to assist the process – ranging from a field-based global advisor, through organisation-wide consultation processes to the production of training, learning and other resource materials. Fourthly, there has been a growing trend to recognise that rights based approaches are not a radically new way to programme, but build on and incorporate what is seen as good development practice.

All four organisations see the adoption and implementation of a rights-based approach as unfinished business where they are still learning and evolving – for example, about what it means in emergencies. But the key features of a rights based approach, such as empowerment, non-discrimination, advocacy, now seem more firmly established. Equally, there is growing understanding of what an organisation needs to do if it wants to properly support the implementation of a rights based approach.

The four organisations discussed in this article are all large international organisations with programmes in different parts of the world. They comprise formalised and complex structures. But many of the lessons they have learned about introducing a rights based approach seem to be of general application and may help others to avoid some of the problems these organisations had faced.

### **1. Evolution Solution for Plan**

Plan's progression towards a rights based approach will take time and it would be a brave organisation that claims to be implementing a rights based approach consistently and organisation-wide ... even supposing a hundred per cent certain of what it is and how it would look on the ground.

Plan's key step towards a rights based approach has been to recognise it is evolution not revolution. We reflected on our approach and work over the past 20 years and how this led us to child-centred community development as a framework. An organisation-wide consultation, including community based organisations (CBOs) and children's groups,

was undertaken for colleagues to think about, describe and demonstrate the framework in practice and to encourage ownership.

In parallel to drawing up the child-centred community development, it has been important to commit to organisation-wide strategic directions and enablers and to identify the knowledge, skills and ways of doing things required to implement these directions.

The most significant aspects for Plan of a rights based approach are:

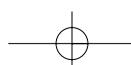
- inclusion – thinking of positive impacts for all children, not just Plan children in Plan communities;
- working at different levels (district, national, etc.) while ensuring the majority of our activities remain at community level;
- recognising that we do already have some experience in advocacy;
- maximising the potential for sponsorship to link communities globally around development education and rights issues to advocate more effectively;
- recognising that addressing all the key components of child-centred community development constitutes a rights based approach. Being unable to address all the components at the same time may not mean the programme is ineffective. The obstacles to the mainstreaming of a rights based approach can be seen in the above list of what needs to be done. We continue to be challenged and motivated at every level of the programmes. But we recognise too that more work is needed to ensure our organisational systems support and reflect a rights based approach. Last, but not least, is another important aspect – that we work with others to encourage donors to change their requirements.

Pauline McKeown, Child Participation and Rights Adviser. Contact: [Pauline.McKeown@plan-international.org](mailto:Pauline.McKeown@plan-international.org)

### **2. Progress is in the mix for UNICEF**

UNICEF formally adopted a human rights based approach to its international cooperation in 1998. Since then, there has been a marked progress in several areas including:

- the focus of UNICEF-assisted programmes on



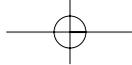


Photo: Penny Tweedie

- marginalised families and children suffering discrimination or in need of special protection;
- more widespread support for the participation of children and young people, although this is uneven and sometimes still driven by events;
- increased backing for national legislative reform in the context of the Convention;
- greater use of the observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the design of country programmes.

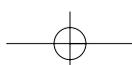
On the other hand, UNICEF has found it more difficult to address issues of accountability through programmes of cooperation and to make progress in addressing gender equality concerns, except notably in the area of girls' education.

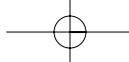
Approaches have also differed among regions. In Latin America and Eastern Europe, for example, there has been greater emphasis on legislative reform and promoting public policies which are pro-children and compatible with the CRC, as well as on managing the effects on children of socio-economic transition. In parts of Africa, UNICEF has promoted the empowerment of families and communities to manage the impact of HIV/AIDS and malaria, as well

as a community focus relating to health services. In other regions, entry into a rights based approach will be found in more specific goal areas, such as basic education – the form of child-friendly schools, maternal mortality reduction and HIV prevention among young people.

The intensity of the use of a rights based approach within UNICEF has depended in part on leadership at the regional level. This is linked to a decentralised view and programme approval process. In some regions, further advances have been made since 1998 in methodological approaches, such as ways to analyse the patterns of claim holders and duty bearers for particular rights. While these concepts and approaches are not yet systematically used by UNICEF, their spread has been helped by the regular updating of programme policies and learning materials to incorporate the latest thinking. The adoption in 2003 by UN agencies of a common definition and agreed characteristics of a rights-based approach to cooperation marked a major advance.

Overall, UNICEF's close association with the Convention since the late 1980s and the adoption of a formal mission statement in 1996 which confirmed





that “UNICEF is mandated ... to advocate for the protection of children’s rights ... [and] is guided by the CRC ...” have provided a strong platform. However, major challenges have still to be overcome when working out the implications of human rights principles for advocacy and programme design, including those for social service delivery systems.

While commitment among staff at all levels is generally strong, the comfort level with the approach continues to depend on a mixture of learning opportunities, the improvement of practical tools, dissemination of experience, reinforcement by senior staff and interactions – encouraging and sometimes otherwise – with a wide range of external partners.

Richard Morgan, Chief, Strategic Planning and Programme Guidance, Division of Policy and Planning, UNICEF New York. Contact: [rmorgan@unicef.org](mailto:rmorgan@unicef.org)

### 3. Dramatic changes at CARE

CARE International (CI) launched its human rights initiative in 1999, after two years of discussions on the relationship between its work and human rights. This coincided with a new vision for the organisation for “a world of hope, tolerance and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and people live in dignity and security”. This underlined many concepts that we and others now relate to rights based approaches (RBA).

This has turned out to be a unifying force for a number of earlier initiatives relating to partnership, gender and diversity, organisational evolution, civil society strengthening, governance and impact measurement. Learning from problems encountered during the roll-out of earlier approaches, in particular household livelihood security, much effort went into engaging the entire organisation in building CARE’s concepts and capacities in rights based approaches.

A global human rights adviser was based in Kenya, working with staff in different CARE members’ and country offices to develop learning and training materials, optional guidance notes, as well as setting up an annual meeting of a CARE-wide RBA reference group. A quarterly newsletter, Rights and Responsibilities, has been produced and widely distributed within and outside CARE, since late 2000.

CARE USA formally adopted RBA as a central plank of its latest four-year strategic plan, and the approach

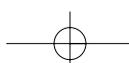
was supported by some other CARE members. It is one of five priority learning areas in CARE UK’s partnership programme agreement with the Department for International Development (DFID). But while other CARE members did not specifically commit to RBA, the first direction in Care International’s strategic plan is that it addresses the underlying causes of poverty and social injustice by establishing a common understanding and guidelines for addressing those causes, including the possibility of moving towards a rights based approach to programming.

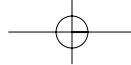
In October 2001, the RBA reference group outlined what was agreed to be the defining characteristics of a rights based approach, and these have now been mainstreamed – in slightly adapted form – into CARE’s work globally as our new Care International programming principles:

- promote empowerment: supporting the efforts of poor and marginalised people to take control of their own lives and fulfil their rights;
- work with partners: building alliances and partnerships with others, including duty bearers;
- ensure accountability and promote responsibility: being held accountable ourselves to poor and marginalised people, and encouraging others to fulfil their responsibilities;
- address discrimination: addressing discrimination and the denial of rights based on sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, class, religion, age, physical ability, caste, opinion or sexual orientation;
- promote the non-violent resolution of conflicts:



Photo: Georgie Scott





- promoting just and non-violent means for preventing and resolving conflicts at all levels; and
- seek sustainable results: addressing underlying causes of poverty and rights denial, to ensure lasting and fundamental improvements to the lives of poor people.

In a highly decentralised structure, with decisions on programme strategies being made at country level, the level of adoption of a RBA has been very unequal, with some CARE members' and country offices much more supportive and advanced in putting this into practice.

The human rights adviser was brought back from Kenya to the US HQ to foster a more global ownership. The new Care International programming principles do, however, provide a shared commitment to rights based principles, to which we seek to hold ourselves accountable.

CARE has not escaped a wider industry struggle to define RBAs in ways that honour the diverse notions of rights and obligations across the cultures in which we work. Using inductive approaches that tap indigenous notions of interdependence, responsibility and dignity has offered the most promising path forward.

Another major obstacle has been the difficulty faced in bringing donors with us as we have adopted this new approach, without always having space to renegotiate older projects or the options to support the longer-term processes of building capacities to demand rights and fulfil obligations that rights based approaches entails.

The impact on our organisation and work has been summed up perhaps most clearly in last year's study by the International NGO Training & Research Centre (INTRAC), *The Implications of Adopting Rights-Based Approaches for Northern NGOs: A Preliminary Exploration*, which states: "A significant change from CARE as a needs based service provider to a rights based facilitator [has occurred]. This is probably one of the most dramatic changes of the NGO world. There is proof of this change, but the extent of it is not yet clear." We are currently working to document the added

value this approach is bringing to the impact of our work.

Jay Goulden, Head of Technical and Policy Unit, CARE International UK. Contact: [goulden@ciuk.org](mailto:goulden@ciuk.org)

#### 4. Responding to the challenge

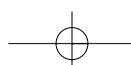
In the mid-1990s, after several years work with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Save the Children began to question how it could integrate the Convention and human rights more fully into its work. It was felt that such work was too often seen as an 'add on' or 'extra' alongside other areas of work. How could the principles and standards of the Convention be fully integrated across all Save the Children's work?

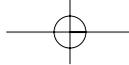
The response to this question was to develop the idea of 'child rights programming'. Instead of an 'add on' to other work, child rights would become the fundamental basis for all Save the Children's work. This would happen in two ways:

- Through all work being seen as contributing to respecting, protecting and fulfilling children's human rights.
- Through the principles and standards of the Convention becoming the measure of what was understood as good practice in quality programming. Good programming, for example, would mean listening to children's voices, combating discrimination, promoting the best interests of the child and ensuring children's survival and development.

Since that time, Save the Children has taken forward its idea of child rights programming through various discussions and publications. Different members of the International Save the Children Alliance<sup>1</sup> have developed their own versions of what they mean by Child Rights Programming, reflecting their own history and experience but incorporating some common principles and values. In 2000 the International Save the Children Alliance as a whole agreed that CRP would be adopted as 'Save the Children's distinctive approach to work' and a special 'coordinating group' was established to guide the development of this approach across the organisation.

<sup>1</sup>The International Save the Children Alliance is a membership organisation of 27 individual Save the Children organisations working in 115 countries.





The overall approach has been a mix of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up'. A lot of the development of the concept has occurred in Save the Children's country and regional programmes, led by self-defined CRP 'champions'. Head offices have mainly tried to help create some basic consistency and a standard framework (e.g. emphasising accountability, children's participation, evolving capacities, non-discrimination, advocacy, etc.).

The process of adopting and implementing CRP in Save the Children has inevitably proceeded unevenly. Some Save the Children organisations have moved quite quickly and made it an explicit part of their organisational identity. They have developed training and other approaches to help staff understand CRP. Others have been much slower to do so, either because they lack the capacity or because there are difficulties in using 'rights-language' in their home countries.

CRP has undoubtedly brought about significant changes to the way many Save the Children programmes work. These include:

- A shift from service delivery per se ('meeting needs') to seeing service delivery as either a response to the absence or lack of capacity of duty bearers or a way of demonstrating good

practice and learning 'what works' in respecting, protecting and fulfilling children's human rights.

- A greater emphasis on advocacy as a means of increasing the accountability of key duty bearers.
- The development of new approaches to listening to children's views and experiences and bringing children into Save the Children's own decision-making.
- A new way of relating to the children and adults with whom Save the Children works – as partners to whom an NGO is accountable, not passive 'beneficiaries'.

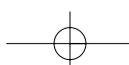
Obstacles still remain however. These include:

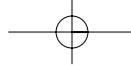
- Continued resistance or scepticism by some staff and senior managers towards rights based approaches in the absence of clear evidence about the value added.
- A need to translate CRP into much more practical tools and approaches to such key parts of programming as situation analysis and monitoring and evaluation.
- Developing new skills required for CRP such as advocacy and facilitating children's participation.

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Photo: Stuart Freedman





## Achieving a common understanding at the UN

*A description of what is entailed in a joint approach and the advantages for development programming*

Since the UN Programme for Reform was launched by the Secretary-General in 1997, a number of UN agencies have adopted a human rights based approach and gained valuable operational insights as a result. But a potential risk of this is that each agency develops its own particular approach and way of doing things. However, UN inter-agency collaboration at global and regional levels, and especially at country level in relation to the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes, requires a common understanding and this affects development programming.

For this reason key UN agencies working in development contexts attempted to arrive at such an understanding. It is built on the basis of those aspects of the human rights based approach that are common to the policy and practice of the UN bodies that participated in the Interagency Workshop on a Human Rights-based Approach in the context of UN reform, 3–5 May 2003.

This Statement of Common Understanding specifically refers to a human rights based approach to the development cooperation and development programming by UN agencies. It states that:

- all programmes of development cooperation, policies and technical assistance should further the realisation of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments;
- human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process; and
- development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of duty-bearers to meet their obligations and/or of 'rights-holders' to claim their rights.

However, a set of programme activities that only incidentally contributes to the realisation of human rights does not necessarily constitute a human rights based approach to programming. In a human rights based approach to programming and development cooperation, the aim of all activities is to contribute directly to the realisation of one or several human

rights.

Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process. These include health, education, governance, nutrition, water and sanitation, HIV/AIDS, employment, as well as social and economic security. Consequently, human rights standards and principles guide both the Common Country Assessment and the UN Development Assistance Framework.

Within these human rights principles are: universality and inalienability; indivisibility; interdependence and interrelatedness; non-discrimination and equality; participation and inclusion; accountability and the rule of law.

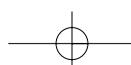
Human rights are **universal and inalienable**. All people everywhere in the world are entitled to them. No one can give them up, nor can others take them away.

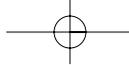
Human rights are **indivisible**. Whether of a civil, cultural, economic, political or social nature, they are all inherent in each one of us. No right has priority over another.

The realisation of one right often depends, wholly or in part, upon the realisation of others – they are **interdependent**. For instance, realisation of the right to health may depend on realisation of the right to education.

All **individuals** are equal as human beings and by virtue of the inherent dignity of each human person. All human beings are entitled to their human rights **without discrimination** of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, ethnicity, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, disability, property, birth or other status as explained by the human rights treaty bodies.

Every person and all peoples are entitled to **active, free and meaningful participation** in, contribution to, and enjoyment of civil, economic, social, cultural and political development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realised.





States and other duty bearers are **accountable** and must act within the **rule of law**. They are answerable for the observance of human rights. They have to comply with the legal norms and standards enshrined in human rights instruments. Where they fail to do so, aggrieved rights-holders are entitled to institute proceedings.

Programmes of development cooperation contribute to the development of the capacities of duty bearers to meet their obligations and of rights-holders to claim their due.

A human rights based approach determines the relationship between individuals and groups with valid claims (rights-holders) and State and non-State actors with related obligations (duty bearers). It identifies rights-holders and their entitlements and corresponding duty bearers and their obligations and works towards strengthening the capacities of rights-holders to make their claims, and of duty bearers to meet their obligations.

Experience has shown that the use of a human rights based approach requires the use of good programming practices. However, the application of this does not by itself constitute a human rights based approach, and requires additional elements.

The following elements are necessary, specific, and unique to a human rights based approach:

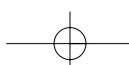
- assessment and analysis to identify the human rights claims of rights-holders and the corresponding human rights obligations of duty bearers, as well as the immediate, underlying, and structural causes of rights failing to be realised;

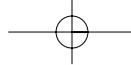
- programmes assess the capacity of rights-holders to claim their rights, and of duty bearers to fulfil their obligations, they then develop strategies to build these capacities;
- programmes monitor and evaluate both outcomes and processes guided by human rights standards and principles;
- programming is informed by the recommendations of international human rights bodies and mechanisms.

Other elements of good programming practices that are also essential under a human rights approach include:

- people are recognised as key actors in their own development, rather than passive recipients of commodities and services;
- participation is both a means and a goal;
- strategies are empowering, not disempowering;
- both outcomes and processes are monitored and evaluated;
- analysis includes all stakeholders;
- programmes focus on marginalised, disadvantaged, and excluded groups.

Other factors must not be overlooked such as ensuring the development process is locally owned; that programmes aim to reduce disparity and both top-down and bottom-up approaches are dovetailed. Situation analysis must also be employed to identify immediate, underlying, and basic causes of development problems. Measurable goals and targets too are important in programming, and strategic partnerships must be developed and sustained. Finally programmes must support accountability to all stakeholders.





## New moves for bilateral aid agencies

*There are still those who claim human rights have nothing to do with development assistance, but the tide is turning, says Laure-Hélène Piron*

The United Nations has been at the forefront of introducing rights based programming to its activities, unlike other governmental aid agencies. But now these appear to be overcoming the challenges and are catching up fast.

So what lies behind this trend? Political, historical, diplomatic, commercial and organisational factors all play their part in helping explain why some bilateral agencies have been quicker than others to adopt human rights based approaches.

The Swedish Agency for International Development (Sida) was one of the front runners and the country's strong social democracy and the place of human rights in its political culture are reasons for this. Sometimes a significant event can influence aid policies. In the case of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the preparation of human rights and rule of law policy documents was in part a response to SDC's experience in Rwanda. Switzerland had been a significant donor since the 1960s. With the 1994 genocide, SDC asked itself how it could have been blind to developments that led to such atrocities, and realised it needed to provide its assistance differently. In the UK, a committed senior manager, acting as an internal champion, building on a favourable domestic political environment following the 1997 elections, was instrumental in the lead up to the adoption of a strategy paper by the Department for International Development (DFID).

In many agencies there are a number of internal constraints about adopting human rights based approaches, or translating human rights commitments into practice.

Agency staff objections include

- they are “political issues”, best dealt with by diplomats;
- they are different from poverty reduction or development – they are unrealistic (because too expensive) and culturally inappropriate (because Western) for poor countries;
- they are too technical, especially when the legal international human rights framework has to be taken into account.

Staff also believe that they

- can work on human rights even if the language is

- not used – as the World Bank claimed in 1998;
- need to know what the “value added” is; what's going to be different in their day-to-day work if they adopt such an approach; and
- the costs associated with this new approach are too great – and they do not want to have to change.

In most bilateral aid agencies, however, there is a small group of staff committed to human rights. It is down to them to influence and assist ministers and senior managers in understanding the justification and significance of the change, and convince colleagues that this is worthwhile and not optional. Informal networking between agencies and coming together at key international events have helped an increasing number of agencies in adopting at least human rights policies, if not human rights based approaches. In 2004 both Japan and Germany officially moved in this direction.

Focusing on civil and political rights is probably still the most straightforward means of understanding of human rights. Support of justice reform or strengthening parliaments are now common areas of work, and promoting principles such as accountability or participation is also common practice in many agencies. Yet this can be done without starting from the human rights standpoint. Difficulties are faced when human rights are regarded as political conditions, as this is seen to go against the commitment to developing partnerships with aid recipients.

Objections raised by economists, in particular that human rights goals might constrain growth, have to be addressed by showing the economic costs of discrimination and the impact on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In the UK's Department for International Development, for example, a rights based approach has been associated with work on tackling inequality and social exclusion, particularly in Latin America.

The technical difficulties involved in human rights is sometimes tackled by simply talking about rights, focusing on advocacy or political empowerment, rather than international standards, legal issues or redress mechanisms. Operational human rights principles (participation, accountability) are used which are easier to remember and to put into practice. Some agencies do offer training, for example

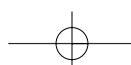




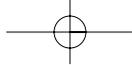
Photo: Caroline Irby

the SDC on minority rights, staff recruitment with a human rights background, as with Sida, or give responsibility to a professional group, like social development advisers in DFID.

Current efforts in many agencies consist in moving beyond policy statements to provide operational guidance, technical support or new procedures and also to document what has been achieved to date. There is a growing demand for hard evidence of a change that has to be measured not just in terms of financial flows, but also values, attitudes and processes. Those that claim that human rights have

nothing to do with development assistance are still influential, but the consensus seems to be moving in a different direction.

*Laure-Hélène Piron is a Research Fellow at the Overseas Development Institute, London, and manages its Rights in Action Programme. Her research on the way development agencies have adopted human rights based approaches and on the right to development and development partnerships can be found at [www.odi.org.uk/rights](http://www.odi.org.uk/rights), or email: [lh.piron@odi.org.uk](mailto:lh.piron@odi.org.uk)*



## Regional insights – South Asia and Latin America

### Moving from needs to rights

#### *Lena Karlsson and Ravi Karkara*

The South Asia region is one of the most poorly governed regions in the world, and it is also the poorest, the most illiterate, the most malnourished, and the least gender-sensitive. Over 40 per cent of the population – that is half a billion – are under 18 years old.

Progressive national legislation for women and children can be noted, however, in most of the countries; all countries in South Asia have signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Yet 70 million children are dropping out of school. Reducing child labour, particularly the hazardous forms, has been difficult to achieve. Patriarchal structures and cultural attitudes perpetuate the lower status of girls and women. Silence over gender disparities is reflected in violence towards them, trafficking and the adverse sex ratios with more males than females continues to characterise the region.

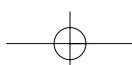
Development work has been very much based on people's needs as opposed to their rights. Many philanthropic and charitable institutions continue to provide services. This has resulted in governments sitting back instead of fulfilling their commitments required by international law. NGOs have taken over their responsibilities instead of supporting them to fulfil their obligations.

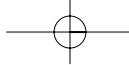
The global acknowledgement of human rights based programming has led many development agencies to question their outcomes and investment in development work in the region. There is a growing interest in rights based approaches and child rights programming (CRP) among various organisations in South Asia. Save the Children Alliance members committed themselves to this approach which was introduced in the late 1990s.

Children's participation in various governance structures like school councils, village development committees, and municipal cooperation galvanised the initiative. Country-based action followed, including capacity building and training backed by Alliance members' financial commitment. The workshop participants developed strategic directions including



Photo Dan White





internal and external capacity building, young people's participation, advocacy, communication, information and documentation and organisational development policies and procedures, human resource management and organisational structures.

The principles of non-discrimination and accountability are integral parts of the strategy but it was later realised that it is important to also have strategic directions on discrimination and accountability. The Save the Children Handbook on Child Rights Programming has been the basic document for creating a joint understanding on CRP among SC members in the region. SC has placed special emphasis on three underpinning CRP principles: accountability, child participation and non-discrimination, which are also seen as important principles for organisational development.

It is therefore important that these are translated into action. Adults' resistance towards children's participation is often the biggest hurdle. Work on non-discrimination will mean that SC has to develop structures, mechanisms and approaches which promote participation of all children. In practical terms it means developing not only child-friendly material, but also material and information for children who are blind, who use sign language and those who do not read and write. It means extra efforts need to be made to reach those who are not often in contact with NGOs and to use mobilising and empowering techniques which enable all children to participate. This requires an increase in budgets and creating partnership with organisations that specialise in such fields.

It is important to press governments to make their policies and programmes not only gender sensitive but also sensitive to the needs and realities of children from various backgrounds. Governments and NGOs also need to develop indicators and monitoring systems that are able to measure diversity and inclusion.

Working from a CRP perspective implies addressing both immediate and root causes of rights violations. Root causes such as power structures and patriarchal values need to be addressed. For example, working against child sexual abuse and exploitation implies addressing sensitive issues such as male sexual behaviour. A central part of any situation analysis is therefore to acquire as much information as possible

of perceptions, values, attitudes and behaviour and how these are transformed into structures and mechanisms for the perpetuation of inequalities.

CRP also implies that organisations and programmes need to be addressed simultaneously in order to have a holistic approach, for example while addressing non-discrimination in programmes it is also essential to address it within our own organisations, questioning how diverse our workforce is. How many men and women from various backgrounds do we have at management, programme, and support staff level? What are the attitudes towards gender and diversity among staff? How do staff members relate with each other? Do the organisations have structures in place to deal with sexual harassment? Is the office accessible for adults and children with disabilities? Does the organisation have a gender and diversity policy and action plan?

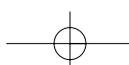
Children's participation is also closely related to participation within our own organisations; for example, how participatory are our decision-making mechanisms? How are men and women from various backgrounds empowered to speak up during meetings? Are there informal decision-making mechanisms in place? If yes, who benefits from these mechanisms? Child protection issues within organisations are another central aspect of CRP, so does the organisation have a child protection policy? Is it implemented? How child-friendly are the office buildings and the staff members, etc.

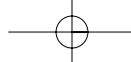
CRP takes time, commitment and money. It can never be done in isolation. Being able to demonstrate positive aspects of its integration and how it flourishes within partnerships requires having practical examples from the field – collecting those examples is therefore very important.

#### **Partner power**

Clear commitment from partner organisations plays a vital role in the successful introduction of CRP. However, many organisations do not have a strategy and coaching is necessary.

This proved the case with DISA, a Bangladesh NGO and one of the few working in the area of child sex abuse (CSA), due to the sensitivity of the subject and the problem of addressing it within families. DISA had a clear commitment to tackle the problem but lacked a strategy to carry it out from a rights based





approach, and had previously used a needs based/voluntary one which did not cover legal and moral obligations and accountability.

DISA staff took part in a CRP introduction training before becoming a formal partner. It then took part in a workshop and prepared a programme to end CSA. This revealed the necessity of having a clear understanding of what CRP entails. Further workshops followed and included identifying rights violations of CSA, its immediate and root causes, key duty bearers as well as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints within DISA itself.

More formal monitoring of the changes within DISA was also required and a coaching tool developed. Board members are now more active, the psychosocial aspects of the programme have been enhanced, duty bearers have been approached and accountability strengthened.

Links have also been forged with other organisations to make CSA work part of their programmes. Participation has benefited too, with boys and girls joining the programme. A strategy is now being drawn up by staff for a nationwide action initiative that recognises both girls and boys can be sex abuse victims.

Taking a rights based approach has also revealed that lack of sex education and inequalities between girls and boys are causes of CSA. A book on safe education has been produced by the organisations

involved that actually tackles sexual concerns, a big advance in a country where the subject is so sensitive.

DISA has recognised it has to address CSA holistically and that the problem is linked to other rights violations such as violence, lack of participation – especially in families, discrimination and rights to health and education.

But it has not been all plain sailing. Teachers in one school forbade children to attend a DISA programme. DISA held a meeting that showed the children wanted to attend and the parents backed them. This underlines the importance of getting children's voices heard and that parents understand they are responsible for ensuring their rights are upheld.

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Ravi Karkara, Regional Programme Manager, Save the Children Sweden-Denmark, South and Central Asia Region, [r.karkara@savechildren-alliance.org.np](mailto:r.karkara@savechildren-alliance.org.np)

DISA: Dhaka 1216 Bangladesh [email]

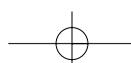
## Fighting stagnation

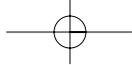
### **Alejandro Cussianovich and Julia Ekstedt**

Civil society got a head start in this region as some Latin American and Caribbean States were the first to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and this opened up campaigning opportunities for children's human rights to be put into practice.



Photo: Michael Amendolia/Network Photographers





Yet 15 years after the CRC was approved and after thousands of children's rights programmes and projects, there is still little sign of improvement to children's lives and the fulfilment of their rights which could have been expected in the region.

National coalitions, mainly consisting of NGOs, were quickly created to take on the task of monitoring the States' fulfilment of the CRC. During the early 1990s a series of actions was carried out which appeared to demonstrate a firm commitment to implementing the CRC: States carried out reforms to adapt laws and internal legislation to the CRC; national monitoring systems were created; training and dissemination campaigns on the CRC; and State reports were elaborated and submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the majority of the countries.

But over the years there was no coordinated or sustainable approach to the work, either from States or from civil society, which is one of the reasons why monitoring the application of the CRC deteriorated. By the end of the decade scattered resources were being generated. Programmes were under way where the roles and responsibilities of different bodies, civil society organisations and the State were not identified and defined therefore jeopardising their completion. Plans, programmes and projects were often too detailed and welfare-reliant. In the end it was obvious no long-term strategies were present safeguarding the compliance of child rights. This was not only in the individual States, but among civil society which now appears to have abandoned its role as watchdog of the implementation of the CRC in several countries.

In total, there has been no reduction in the number of violations of children's rights; on the contrary, some trends show that certain groups are suffering more than before. Furthermore, boys and girls had become aware that they have rights, as expressed in the CRC and national legislation. In a number of countries, children's organisations and initiatives are represented in schools, in neighbourhoods, and by certain groups of children at a national level. Although they are working to assert their rights, they are aware that their rights are not being respected. They themselves are not being taken into consideration as rights-holders during the course of the programmes and projects being implemented by adult-led organisations. This has led to breakdown in trust and the growth of scepticism. They feel let down by adults.

In spite of the progress and attention being given to children's rights, questions can be asked about the impact and results regarding compliance with the CRC. To achieve greater impact and better results, features relating to perspectives of human rights have been developed and Child Rights Programming (CRP) has been introduced to the region.

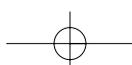
CRP is a process which requires integral strategies within organisations and a constant updating of practice. It is important that national contexts and the organisation's characteristics are taken into consideration in this process. As the rights based approach is incorporated into the work, there is a need for a precise measurement of the advances in compliance with the CRC, as well as in the inclusion of the views of the child as a rights holder.

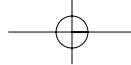
In this region CRP has been carried out through a process of training and revision of programmes of national organisations and institutions. Save the Children has carried out a wide training programme among civil society and State institutions. This training challenges the participants to make conceptual, methodological and practical changes to the different parts of the institutional programming. The CRP process has achieved some results, including:

- a re-launch of the CRC as a practical tool for the fulfilment of children's rights;
- clarifying the role of each actor in realising the rights of children, with the State being the main duty bearer, and civil society and others such as the family and peers, as co-responsible;
- defining long-term strategies for achieving changes to ensure improvements to children's lives;
- increasing integration of projects to promote the rights of children;
- increasing boys and girls' participation within an organisation's programmes;
- greater understanding and commitment to the work to combat violations of children's rights;
- increased coordination and networking among a broader group of actors in training, development and the production and adaptation of materials.

### **New ways for the ronderos**

Child Rights Programming is making progress in the north of Peru following a workshop for 40 ronderos (local peasant patrolmen and women) from rural communities in the Amazonian rainforest.





Ronderos are adults and children who maintain social order, administer justice, and protect the interests of their villages and territories. They have become a collective ombudsman for the rights, traditions and possessions of their communities. Both men and women, all responsible for patrolling areas in a marginalised part of the country, took part in the seminar.

Children's rights have received a significant boost through the ronderos' work and that of individual guards protecting women, boys and girls in the province's principal city Jaén. Their visits to small villages encouraged the people to consider children's rights. However, a number of violations of the rights of children had been reported which gave the area's guards the chance to introduce a more systematic approach. The seminar marked a first important step.

A Save the Children manual, *Child Rights Programming: how to apply a rights based approach*, provided the basis and each rondero received a copy. A number of lessons were learned and formed points for discussion. These included:

- although they were involved in the struggle for rights for their communities, the ronderos were not sufficiently aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its provisions, limitations and ethical and legal requirements;
- they recognised that the children of their communities were not shown due respect either in their families or in the schools;
- they accepted that the rondero members needed to revise their own regulations which permitted physical force and the use of violence to quell misbehaviour;
- they decided to reproduce, in their own way, what they had learned in the workshop; and

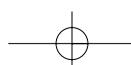
- maybe more importantly, as an outcome of the discussions initiated in the workshop, the ronderos created offices for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents in more than 10 towns in the region.

Three key points were made during the workshop. A rights based approach has an impact on unjust situations which are still seen as normal by some of those in rural areas. The rights based approach opened participants' eyes to the fact that these injustices are unacceptable and the rights of children in their area must be enforced. Adult participants are experienced in organising their own initiatives to defend the rights of children. These must form part of the wider rights struggle and include the participation of children as rights-holders. To combat the violations of rights, diverse efforts need to be made to identify all those responsible for improving the situation. However, using the local station, Radio Marañón, it has been possible to continue the workshop's work and ensure that the children themselves defend their rights as child ronderos.

It could be said that a new culture of childhood is being forged, one where the customs and traditions of the ronderos are meshed with the Convention on the Rights of the Child – for example corporal punishment as a corrective is being revised and prohibited.

The workshop continues to bear fruit, and was clearly well worth the effort to overcome the barriers of huge distances to bring the participants together.

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## Factfile

*Read on: Reviews of five essential books and what they offer*

*Children's Rights: turning principles into practice*  
Save the Children Sweden and UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Stockholm, 2000 and 2005

How can the key principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child be used to create concrete and effective programmes for children? How can abstract rights be turned into real change for children at the grass roots level?

These are the questions addressed by this important collection of essays and they are key ones for anyone wishing to use a rights based approach to work with children.

The book brings together a set of distinguished contributors to discuss possible answers. It opens with four essays that look at the general principles of the CRC: non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, survival and development and participation. Each essay explores the meaning of the principle under discussion, and provides a valuable introduction to how it has been interpreted and the key dilemmas it raises.

Two other essays then look at areas where the interpretation of the CRC has been the subject of misunderstanding and confusion. The first of these concerns the balance between children's rights, parental responsibilities and the State's obligations. When and how, for example, should the State step in to protect children's rights? The second area is about the evolving capacities of the child – how can we avoid underestimating or overestimating children's competence?

The remaining essays in the book look at some key rights, such as the right to play and the right not to be hit, and at ways in which political structures can support the practical implementation of rights.

This is a thought-provoking book that will help anyone trying to come to terms with translating the language of the CRC into practical action. It is not a programming guide but it will aid anyone looking for the stimulation of new ideas as they explore the field of rights based programming with children.

Bill Bell, Head of Child Rights, Citizenship and Protection, Save the Children UK

*Human Rights and Development*  
Peter Uvin, Kumarian Press, 2004

This book's great breadth and depth of scholarship from the perspective of a development practitioner produces a seminal contribution to the subject. It is also highly readable and entertaining and this is down to Uvin's discursive style

and passion for principled social change. In all it is an essential work for all those in development, as well as those whose primary interest is in human rights.

Although Uvin advocates a rights based approach to development, he also examines the debates around human rights, development, and human rights in development. The book is strong on the dangers and difficulties involved in a shift to a rights based approach (RBA), but Uvin is also clear that carrying on as before is not an option.

Uvin looks at both the theory of a RBA and its practical implications; he is also explicit that those organisations adopting a RBA must look closely at the application of human rights internally, and not only in their programmatic work. Considering the main readership of the CRIN Newsletter, it is perhaps also worth noting that Uvin expects it to be NGOs who adopt most fully (and most radically) the RBA.

Uvin concludes: "The RBA is not the solution to all problems, a magical key that will finally unlock the gates of development nirvana. It is a lens, a way of looking at the world, of defining struggles and partaking in them."

Guy Cave, Child Rights Programming Adviser, Save the Children UK

*Human Development Report 2000*  
United Nations Development Programme, HDR2000

This report makes a clear case for rights based human development and contributes considerably to the legitimacy of human rights in international development. For these reasons it has become a key source for practitioners.

It is not packed with practical guidance, however, rather it is a thought-provoking blend of ideas from both development and human rights thinkers. Economic and political and civil rights are joined through the notion that human development is "the process of enlarging people's choices by expanding human functionings and capabilities". These are Amartya Sen's words, author of the first chapter and the intellectual force behind rights based programming.

The central focus of the book is on human rights and poverty with chapters covering struggles for rights, inclusive democracy, empowerment in the fight against poverty, accountability and human rights indicators. The arrival of this publication marked a move, among at least certain parts of the international system, away from being the voice of its constituents to being the conscience of its member states.

HDR2000 makes considerable use of indexes. Siblings of the original human development index (HDI) include human poverty, a gender-related development, and a gender

empowerment. But take care of over-reliance on the indexes. They are only as good as the data behind them, but do provide useful tools to make international comparisons. HDR2000 has nearly 50 pages of data presentation and analysis.

As stimulating as HDR2000 still is, you will have to look elsewhere to find out how its ideas might be applied to rights based approaches to development programming. HDR2000 is strong on principles but less helpful in showing how to turn those principles into practice.

Tom Hewitt, Coordinator, CRIN

*Promoting Rights-Based Approaches: Experiences and Ideas from Asia and the Pacific*  
Joachim Theis, Save the Children Sweden, 2004

“There are no blueprints for how an organisation should become rights-based”, declares the introduction to this book. However here is a set of documented experiences spanning four years from an organisation that captures one corner of the market – rights-based programming for children. Notwithstanding its specific focus on children, the book offers much to learn about good practice for organisations in other sectors engaged in human rights development work.

The book is divided into four sections. The first gives an account of the evolution of rights based programming and some of the processes an organisation would need to go through in order to become rights-based. The second concentrates on how the legal language of human rights standards can be translated into practical language for use in different sectors, with case histories in education, HIV/AIDS, and organisational management. In each the authors describe some of the changes in mind-sets required by staff to reach this goal.

This is then extended with accounts of ways of working using a rights based approach, again supported by actual examples of promoting child participation, combating discrimination, and strengthening the accountability of duty bearers through the use of the media.

The last section gets down to the nuts and bolts of how to do rights based programming. There are no fixed rules here, but the reader is taken through a description of the use and limitations of a series of tried and tested tools and their application to human rights work. Examples are drawn from analysis and planning through to monitoring and evaluation of rights based programmes.

Read in conjunction with other, more analytical texts, this book is an invaluable addition to the human rights practitioner’s collection of guidelines.

Tom Hewitt, Coordinator, CRIN

*Human Rights Approaches to Development Programming*  
Urban Jonssen, UNICEF 2003

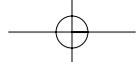
This, one of the first on the subject, explores the practical application of human rights principles and standards to development work. Written with a primary focus on work supported by UNICEF in East and Southern Africa, the book explores how rights based approaches will change what UN agencies are doing, how they work, and particularly why they do their work.

A concise overview of human rights principles provides the basis for a theoretical framework to a human rights based approach to programming, leading into an exploration of its practical application in community capacity development.

Three case studies, child health in Tanzania, malaria in Mozambique and HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe provide a platform for sharing UNICEF’s experiences using these approaches. The book considers the obstacles to children realising their rights, role pattern analysis of stakeholders in these rights, and capacity gap analysis as a way of programming for capacity development programmes, including how duty bearers handle their responsibilities.

In the examples the participatory processes are highlighted equally with the impact achieved. The Triple A cyclical process, of Assessment, Analysis, Action, provides a methodology to engage with key stakeholders as change continues.

Peter Dixon, Independent Consultant on Child Rights Programming,  
peter-dixon@beeb.net



## Warnings and ways forward

*RBA is riding on a tide of goodwill, but even its most convinced supporters have concerns. Maisha Frost sounds out some sceptical viewpoints*

Over the last decade or so there has been a growing interest in rights based approaches (RBA) to development, with some big claims being made for them. However, although it is hard to find any out-and-out detractors, there are certainly growing concerns about it.

As Guy Cave, Child Rights Programming Adviser in Save the Children UK explains: "RBA have possibly been so popular because they reflect the concern shared by many that previous models of development didn't work because they didn't adequately deal with issues of voice, power and (Government) accountability – issues that are central to human rights."

General goodwill aside, however, compelling and influential warning voices are being raised about the route itself, how far and where it is heading.

Peter Uvin, Henry J. Leir Associate Professor of International Humanitarian Studies at the Fletcher School at Tufts University (Bloomfield, USA), points out: "There is less to the emerging human rights approach in the development regime than meets the eye. Much of it is about the quest for the moral high ground: draping oneself in the mantle of human rights to cover the fat belly of the development community while avoiding challenging the status quo too much, cross-examining oneself, or questioning the international system. ..."

"The people in whose name the innovations are adopted did not fight for this change. It is not part of a fundamental reshuffling of the cards of power of a redistribution of resources worldwide. ... As a result, one could expect little more than fluff ..."

Uvin admits that he is painting a particularly negative picture, especially as someone who had strongly argued that the old ways of development were in need of an overhaul. His aim, he explains, "is to prick through a few balloons in the hope ... the noise will be enough to rouse academics, policy-makers and practitioners from the comfortable sleep of the just." He has recently developed his views in his book "Human Rights and Development", where he suggests ways forward.

Hugo Slim agrees with Uvin's concern that the new human rights agenda in development circles may be about "fluff" and "power" and taking the moral high ground without changing practice in any meaningful way.

But, argues Slim, while just talking about rights can deliver a feel-good adrenalin rush for the speaker, it is far more than that. "The power of speech is the power to name and define things. The same language of rights that may be rhetorical fluff in one place may be words of extreme courage and radical change in another," he declares. "Rights-talk has the ability to finally politicise development between the muddy low ground and the moral high ground. Rights-talk stops people being perceived as 'needy' ..."

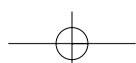
Although there may well be much repackaging of neo-liberal economic and political projects in rights terms, Slim has a strong hunch there is more going on. "The rights ideology may function as something of a Trojan horse for those who really mean what they say about human rights." While governments are doing one thing, he continues, "others are using human rights in a different and prophetic way down in the muddy lowlands. And there is also a group of international NGOs who straddle the middle hill country between the moral highlands and the lowlands who are using human rights talk in a slightly different way to mainstream power."

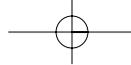
The challenge for Slim is for people, using human rights prophetically rather than piously, to organise and create a countervailing force to the complacency and oppression of those on the moral high ground.

"It involves," he says, "abolishing the development enterprise as a neo-colonial programme of correction administered from rich to poor and replacing it with a common political project that recognises everyone's equal rights ..."

As well as dangers from rhetorical repackaging, the development community must also avoid over reacting – from seeing RBA as the answer to everything to dismissing it as just a fad. Fundamental changes, such as those required by adoption of a RBA, will take time to be embedded in organisations and for the results to be seen. Evaluation of the impact of RBA will be essential in assessing their worth, says Guy Cave, who also argues for the views of those who are the intended beneficiaries to be central in both the planning and evaluation of RBA.

Although evaluating RBA brings with it new challenges, evaluations are already under way. CARE US and Oxfam US are just completing one; and the UK Interagency RBA group has recently started an evaluation (funded by UK's Department for International Development) assessing work in Malawi, Peru and Bangladesh.





There are also concerns about the degree of change that the adoption of a RBA means for an organisation, potentially including the internal application of human rights principles; the shift from pure service delivery to increasing advocacy; rights training; new induction systems; changes in the nature of relationships with partners and/or finding new partners.

Other concerns focus around 'good-for-business' issues. While morally commendable, it is feared that RBA may not go down so well with donors focused on the kind of results associated with conventional service delivery. Being encouraged to contribute to projects where tangible results might be seen as playing 'second fiddle' to processes may not seem so attractive. Those in fund-raising departments may also feel that a shift to RBA makes their work harder to sell to the general public. On the other hand, some believe that organisations are doing 'the same old work' but couching it in rights language to appeal to those donors who have shifted to a RBA.

There has also been some debate as to whether accountability, which lies at the heart of RBA, is undermined by the lack of legal recourse (justiciability) in many situations. Uvin lists ways in which societies do not need to rely solely on the courts to hold people accountable, and he includes "the systematic mobilisation of shame and the development of international coalitions mobilising it; the pressure emanating from the spread of shared expectations and socially acceptable discourses; the mobilisation of grass roots and citizen power in favour of certain rights; the certainty that international aid actors will speak out loudly against violations and will extend support to local actors opposing these violations; and the creation of ombudsmen and whistle-blowers among other administrative complaint mechanisms."

Philosophical and cultural objections to RBA have flagged up concerns about human rights being a western imposition and RBA being a new form of imperialism. This may never be resolved and that's not such a bad thing, believes Uvin. "Constant debate obliges us to come down from the moral high ground and question ourselves."

As far as a child rights-based approach is concerned, objections and concerns have centred on the western conception of childhood as a time of innocence and dependency, which it is believed has been exported through colonialism and international aid. This does not take account of the complex and

varied reality of children's lives and is now reflected in international law. The result, it is claimed, are damaging interventions in children's lives based on inaccurate and stereotyped images.

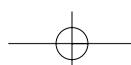
Guy Cave replies "Our response is not to abandon the concept of children's rights, the UNCRC, and a child rights-based approach as all being irretrievably western, and therefore inappropriate and probably damaging. Rather our response should be a renewed focus on trying to understand the complex realities of children's lives (and those of their families) in different cultures and contexts.

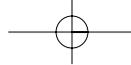
"The voices of children themselves must be prominent in that exploration of what is going on in their lives – we must approach children as knowing subjects who are acting upon their environment, and who are in a process of transforming childhood. This information and the views of children, families and communities in the South must be allowed to guide the development of the rights-based approach (both its theory and practice)."

Cave sums up: "Due to the centrality of the UNCRC in current development discourse related to children, it is hard for many child-focused development actors to imagine another approach than a child-rights based one – it certainly has many advantages in changing how we view and relate to children, however we must remain critical and see if it really works in terms of making positive changes (as identified by children) in the lives of children."



Photo: Stuart Freedman





## Challenges for a rights based approach

*What must be overcome to stop RBA ending up as just another fad? Joachim Theis outlines the major obstacles*

A rights based approach is fundamentally about challenging the power relations that lie at the root of poverty, exploitation, discrimination, violence and abuse. This requires an in-depth analysis of power and politics and the processes that support people to claim their rights and motivate people in power to fulfil their obligations.

One of the biggest challenges for rights based organisations is working in areas where duty bearers are ineffective. Some governments refuse to accept responsibility for delivering basic services and for protecting their citizens. In conflict situations it may be difficult to identify those responsible and with the authority to protect and fulfil rights. In a globalised world basic services are provided by the private sector, government authority is decentralised and accountability may be diffused with the result that nobody can be held accountable.

Rights based approaches and strategies have to be adapted to different country contexts. In countries with weak institutions a rights based organisation may have to strengthen the accountability of community-level duty bearers, since legislative and policy reform at national level requires effective government and civil society structures.

Some of the world's most powerful governments and institutions do not recognise economic, social and cultural rights. This makes it more difficult to demand free health and education services from governments. Most human rights strategies deal with civil and political rights and are not well suited to promoting economic and social ones. The conceptual and practical gaps between human rights and economics have to be addressed by human rights agencies, development organisations and academic institutions.

Rights based development agencies have to make much greater efforts to strengthen systems of redress and to use legal mechanisms to claim rights. The potential for enforcing rights through the courts is great, but in many countries the judicial system is skewed in favour of the ruling elites. Most development agencies have little experience of dealing with legislative systems.

RBA enables people to influence government decisions that affect their lives. It promotes transparent, fair, equitable, responsive and participatory governance. It reduces opportunities for corruption,

deters violations of rights, challenges impunity, ensures access to remedies and broadens democratic spaces at all levels of society. More needs to be done to clarify the concept, the meaning and implications of rights based governance. Clarification of the differences between a technocratic and a rights based approach to governance is also required.

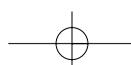
Participation is a basic human right that entitles rights-holders to claim their due. In contrast many development organisations see participation primarily in terms of improving the efficiency of programmes and services. To support the right to participation requires the strengthening of the rights to information, expression, decision-making and association and of an independent media. These civil rights are important instruments for demanding other social, economic, cultural and political rights. As rights based agencies are becoming more aware of these links they will devote more effort towards promoting civil and political rights in society.

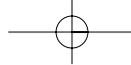
One of the most important roles of rights based organisations is to support rights-holders to claim their rights. This requires major shifts in the ways many agencies are working. Rather than delivering services and doing advocacy on behalf of poor and disadvantaged people, RBA requires organisations to support people to demand what they are entitled to. This should be done directly and by changing the broader social and political environment to make it easier for citizens to take action to demand their rights.

A rights based approach demands that agencies work together to support broad processes of change in society. Supporting participatory processes that bring together government and civil society is one of the most effective ways to change the relationships between rights-holders and duty bearers. Many governments and aid agencies, however, continue to implement their own top-down, sector-specific projects to deliver technical solutions without changing relationships between stakeholders.

Children's rights should not just be the concern of child-focused agencies. The same way that gender has been mainstreamed (at least in theory), childhood and generation issues have to be mainstreamed across all development and human rights agencies.

Children's participation has to be understood more





explicitly in terms of children's empowerment to demand their rights and in terms of children's civil rights. Promoting children's rights to information, expression and decision-making at home, in schools and in the media goes a long way to lay the foundation for greater acceptance of children's participation in society.

Putting RBA into practice requires organisations to create issue-specific frameworks for all major programme areas, such as education, health, HIV/AIDS, environment, poverty eradication, etc. Existing frameworks have to be revised to ensure they incorporate the principles and standards of RBA.

Critical evaluations are needed to assess the impact, outcomes and effectiveness of RBA. Documenting and disseminating RBA experiences are priorities –

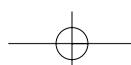
case studies and lessons learned documents are effective means of doing this.

A rights based approach requires organisations to take controversial positions and to confront human rights abuses. Agencies may face resistance from staff and partners who see themselves as welfare workers rather than as rights activists who challenge people and institutions in power. Some organisations pick and choose what they like from RBA, leaving out the most difficult and uncomfortable tasks. There is also the continuing challenge to prevent RBA from becoming just the latest development fad where everybody uses the RBA rhetoric without tangible change taking place in practice.

Joachim Theis, Child Rights Advisor, International Save the Children Alliance in Bangkok, Thailand. Contact: [joachim@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:joachim@loxinfo.co.th)



Photo: Jenny Matthews/Network Photographers



# Factfile

## *Glossary*

**Accountability** – States and other duty bearers are accountable and must act within the rule of law. They are answerable for the observance of human rights. They have to comply with the legal norms and standards enshrined in human rights instruments. Where they fail to do so, aggrieved rights-holders are entitled to institute proceedings.

**Convention** – Binding agreement between States; used synonymously with Treaty and Covenant. Conventions are stronger than declarations because they are legally binding on governments that have signed them. When the UN General Assembly adopts a Convention, it creates international norms and standards. Once a Convention is adopted by the UN General Assembly, Member States can then ratify the Convention, promising to uphold it.

**Customary international law** – Law that becomes binding on States although it is not written, but rather adhered to out of custom. When enough States have begun to behave as though something is law, it becomes law “by use”; this is one of the main sources of international law.

**Equality and non-discrimination** – All individuals are equal as human beings and by virtue of the inherent dignity of each human person. All human beings are entitled to their human rights without discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, ethnicity, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, disability, property, birth or other status as explained by the human rights treaty bodies.

**Duty bearers** – Human rights are linked to duties, accountability, obligation and responsibility. Duty bearers are the actors collectively responsible for the realisation of human rights. Those who bear duties with respect to a human right are accountable if the right goes unrealised. When a right has been violated or insufficiently protected there is always someone or some institution that has failed to perform a duty.

**Human rights** – the rights people are entitled to simply because they are human beings, irrespective of their citizenship, nationality, race, ethnicity, language,

gender, sexuality, or abilities. Human rights become enforceable when they are codified as Conventions, Covenants, or Treaties, or as they become recognised as customary international law.

**Inalienability** – Human rights are inalienable, they cannot be taken away by others, nor can one give them up voluntarily.

**Indivisibility** – Human rights are indivisible in two senses. First, there is no hierarchy among different kinds of rights. Civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are all equally necessary for a life of dignity. Second, some rights cannot be suppressed in order to promote others. Civil and political rights may not be violated to promote economic, social and cultural rights. Nor can economic, social and cultural rights be suppressed to promote civil and political rights.

**Interrelatedness and interdependence** – The realisation of one right often depends, wholly or in part, upon the realisation of others. For instance, realisation of the right to health may depend, in certain circumstances, on realisation of the right to education or the right to information.

**Participation** – Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to, and enjoyment of civil, economic, social, cultural and political development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realised.

**Ratification** – Ratification, acceptance and approval all refer to the act undertaken on the international plane, whereby a State establishes its consent to be bound by a treaty. Most multilateral treaties expressly provide for States to express their consent to be bound by signature subject to ratification, acceptance or approval.

**Realisation of human rights** – A human right is realised when individuals enjoy the freedoms covered by that right and the enjoyment of the right is secure. A person’s human rights are realised if

sufficient social arrangements are in place to protect her/him against threats to her/his enjoyment of the freedoms covered by those rights.

**Reservation** – A reservation is a statement made by a State by which it purports to exclude or alter the legal effect of certain provisions of a treaty in their application to that State. A reservation may enable a State to participate in a multilateral treaty that it would otherwise be unable or unwilling to participate in. States can make reservations to a treaty when they sign, ratify, accept, approve or accede to it. When a State makes a reservation upon signing, it must confirm the reservation upon ratification, acceptance or approval.

**State party(ies)** – A State party to a treaty is a State that has expressed its consent to be bound by that treaty by an act of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, etc., where that treaty has entered into force for that particular State. This means that the State is bound by the treaty under international law.

**Treaty body** – A committee of independent experts appointed to monitor the implementation by States parties of the core international human rights treaties. They are called “treaty bodies” because each is created in accordance with the provisions of the treaty which it oversees. In many important respects, they are independent of the United Nations system, although they receive support from the United Nations Secretariat and report of the General Assembly. Also referred to as the “committee” or “treaty-monitoring body”.

**Universality** – Human rights belong to all people, and all people have equal status with respect to these rights. Failure to respect an individual's human right has the same weight as failure to respect the right of any other – it is not better or worse depending on the person's gender, race, ethnicity, nationality or any other distinction.

## Publications

*Thematic publications – rights based approaches*

Alianza Save the Children, *Child Rights Programming: how to apply rights based approaches in programming* (2002). This handbook contains the key features of child rights programming. It demonstrates how the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be used as the basis for programming and as a tool for advocacy and change and provides useful background material for training workshops on child rights programming. Available from: [www.sclat.org/search/publieng.php?cod=6&lang=e](http://www.sclat.org/search/publieng.php?cod=6&lang=e)

Asian Development Bank, *Working with Children: Exploring Ways for ADB Assistance* (2003). This publication examines rights based approaches as a primary goal for assisting street children without forgetting existing needs for service provision. It also includes examples of interventions to assist street children as well as references to main publications and websites dealing with street children. Available from: [http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Street\\_Children/Working\\_Streetchildren/](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Street_Children/Working_Streetchildren/)

CARE, *CARE Human Rights Initiative, Basic Introduction to Human Rights and Rights-Based Programming* (2004). This manual is for relief and development workers thinking about applying a rights based approach to their work. The workshop that is laid out can be run by anyone with basic facilitation skills. Available from: [http://www.careinternational.org.uk/resource\\_centre/civilsociety/basic\\_introduction\\_to\\_human\\_rights.pdf](http://www.careinternational.org.uk/resource_centre/civilsociety/basic_introduction_to_human_rights.pdf)

CARE, *Rights Based Approach Resource Centre* (2004). This resource brings together various papers, tools and manuals describing CARE's experience in applying a rights based approach to development. It also includes some of the materials and documents on rights based approaches from outside CARE. Available from: [www.careinternational.org.uk/resource\\_centre/rba\\_index.php](http://www.careinternational.org.uk/resource_centre/rba_index.php)

Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe, *A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People* (Compass, 2002). This aims to make human rights education accessible and useful to educators, facilitators, leaders, teachers, volunteers and trainers who are active in educational activities with young people. Visit: [www.eycb.coe.int/compass/en/contents.html](http://www.eycb.coe.int/compass/en/contents.html).

Jones, Hazel, Save the Children Sweden, *Disabled children's rights: a practical guide*, Rätts Barnen (2001). ISBN 91 89366 77 8, US\$12 plus US\$ 6 handling

charge. The purpose of this practical guide is to provide a tool to encourage all types of organisation to take a rights based approach to policies and programmes for disabled children. Visit: <http://www.lrb.se/Shop/Products/Product.aspx?Itemid=364>

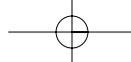
Loubser, Jan, *A Strategy for Promoting a Human Rights Based Development in Uganda* (2002). This paper offers ideas and proposals towards a strategy for the promotion of rights based development in Uganda by the Uganda Human Rights Commission and its partners. Visit: [www.undp.org/governance/huristapapply.htm](http://www.undp.org/governance/huristapapply.htm)

Mediterranean Initiative for Child Rights *MEDIN project*, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC), Florence, Italy and UNICEF Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa (MENARO), Amman, Jordan, *Towards a New Agenda for Children in the Southern Mediterranean Countries: A Rights-Based Analysis* (2001). This report provides a broad overview of the situation of children in the MEDIN countries, and points to areas of policy priority and areas where further in-depth research is required. Visit: [www.unicef-icdc.org/siteguide/indexsearch.html](http://www.unicef-icdc.org/siteguide/indexsearch.html)

Petren, A. and Himes, J. (eds), Save the Children Sweden and UNICEF, Regional Office for South Asia, *Children's Rights: Turning principles into practice*, Rätts Barnen (2000). ISBN 91 89366 63 79, 220 SEK. This collection of essays uses the message of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to show how its principles can be converted into effective programmes. It is helpful for planners, managers, disabled people's organisations and parents.

Plan, *Children Changing their World: understanding and evaluating children's participation in development* (2004). This report focuses on children's participation in development programmes to identify and use qualitative indicators for children's participation as part of Plan's rights based approach to implementing country programmes. Visit: [www.plan-uk.org/pdfs/childrenchangingtheirworld.pdf](http://www.plan-uk.org/pdfs/childrenchangingtheirworld.pdf)

van Reisen, Miriam, Save the Children, *Invisible Children? Towards Integration of Children in EU and Member States' Development Co-operation Policies* (2002). This report focuses on how the EU can incorporate the principles of the UN Convention on



the Rights of the Child into development policy and programmes. Available from:  
[www.pela.fi/InvisibleChildren.pdf](http://www.pela.fi/InvisibleChildren.pdf)

Robinson, Shirley, Save the Children Sweden, *Children First in the Poverty Battle! A Review of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers in the Southern African Region from a Child Rights Perspective* (2003). The Poverty Reduction Strategy's Paper (PRSP) approach forms the basis of the international community's redefined anti-poverty framework, and is a prerequisite for access to a broader range of concessional and developmental assistance for low-income developing countries. Available from:  
[www.rb.se/NR/rdonlyres/D2C74B29-36AC-416D-9C2B-9537F5894060/0/Childrenfirstinthepovertybattle.pdf](http://www.rb.se/NR/rdonlyres/D2C74B29-36AC-416D-9C2B-9537F5894060/0/Childrenfirstinthepovertybattle.pdf)

Save the Children UK, *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child CD-ROM Training Kit* (2004). This offers a comprehensive training package on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Activities cover the background to the UNCRC, content and implementation of the UNCRC and how to use and work with the UNCRC in policy and practice. Available from:  
[www.l.rb.se/Shop/Products/Product.aspx?Itemid=1187](http://www.l.rb.se/Shop/Products/Product.aspx?Itemid=1187)

Theis, Joachim, Save the Children Sweden – South East Asia Regional Office (2004) *Promoting Rights-Based Approaches: Experiences and Ideas from Asia and the Pacific*. This book reviews experiences of rights based approaches in South Asia and explores how human rights principles and standards can be translated into practical ideas for education, HIV/AIDS programming and organisational development and management. Available from:  
[www.seapa.net/external/resources/resources.htm](http://www.seapa.net/external/resources/resources.htm)

Bogale, Tibebe, Save the Children Sweden, *Child Rights Programming: a training manual developed in Eastern and Central Africa*, Rädna Barnen (2002). Price 100SEK. This handbook presents the key features of child rights programming and how it is linked to human rights. It is an attempt at directing practical examples into a simple and clear outline that can be used for training purposes.

Tomasevski, Katarina, *Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to education, mission to Indonesia, 1–7 July 2002*.

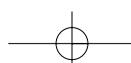
Recommendations from this report include the development of rights based indicators to chart the links between education, human rights violations, poverty and conflict; government commitment to ensure free, compulsory, universal nine-year education for all; and a sixfold increase in allocation to education, and transparency in resource allocation. Visit:  
[www.right-to-education.org/content/index\\_3.html](http://www.right-to-education.org/content/index_3.html)

UNICEF, *Guidelines for Human Rights-Based Programming Approach* (1998). This text offers an understanding of the rights based approach to working with children and explores the implications for programme assessment, analysis and strategy development. Visit: [www.coe-dmha.org/Unicef/HPT\\_IntroReading01.htm](http://www.coe-dmha.org/Unicef/HPT_IntroReading01.htm)

University of Minnesota, Circle of Rights, *Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Activism: A Training Resource* (2000). This manual addresses issues of strategy and tactics that organisations and individuals might consider when devising projects to promote economic, social and cultural rights. Available from:  
[www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/IHRIP/circle/part2/usingthemanual.htm](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/IHRIP/circle/part2/usingthemanual.htm)

White, Sarah C., *Being, Becoming and Relationship: Conceptual Challenges of a Child Rights Approach to Development* (2004). This paper argues that making children central to development and social analysis requires a person-centred rather than category-centred approach, recognising the fundamental importance of relationship to people's actions, entitlements and well-being. Available from:  
[www.eldis.org/static/DOC14858.htm](http://www.eldis.org/static/DOC14858.htm)

Wolfensohn, Galit, Save the Children, *Responding to Child Trafficking: an introductory handbook to child rights-based interventions drawn from Save the Children's experience in Southeast Europe* (2004). This handbook outlines practical strategies for developing rights based approaches to child trafficking interventions. These strategies are illustrated through concrete examples as well as through children's words and images, drawn from the pilot projects carried out through the framework of the regional programme. Available from:  
[www.childcentre.info/projects/traffickin/dbaFile11301.pdf](http://www.childcentre.info/projects/traffickin/dbaFile11301.pdf)



## Information

The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) is a membership-driven organisation and network of more than 1,500 child rights organisations around the world. It strives to improve the lives of children through the exchange of information about child rights and the promotion of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **A website**

Updated regularly, the website, which is a leading resource on child rights issues, contains references to hundreds of publications, recent news and forthcoming events as well as details of organisations working worldwide for children. The site also includes reports submitted by NGOs to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Two recent thematic websites have been launched recently: on rights based approaches to programming – [www.crin.org/hrbap](http://www.crin.org/hrbap) and on violence against children – [www.crin.org/violence](http://www.crin.org/violence)

### **An email service**

Distributed twice a week, CRINMAIL provides regular news bulletins about child rights issues, as well as information about new publications and forthcoming events.

### **A newsletter**

Published yearly, the Newsletter is a thematic publication that examines a specific issue affecting children. It also summarises news, events, campaigns and publications.

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### **[www.crin.org](http://www.crin.org)**

Bookmark CRIN's website to learn more, or email us to contribute news or information.

CRIN is supported by Save the Children Sweden, Save the Children UK, the International Save the Children Alliance, the United Nations Children's Fund and Plan International.

## Previous issues

CRIN Newsletter 12, March 2000:  
Education;

CRIN Newsletter 13, November 2000:  
Children and Macroeconomics;

CRIN Newsletter 14, June 2001:  
The Special Session on Children;

CRIN Newsletter 15, March 2002:  
Mainstreaming Child Rights;

CRIN Newsletter 16, October 2002:  
Children and Young People's Participation;

CRIN Newsletter 17, May 2003:  
Children's Rights and the Private Sector;

CRIN Newsletter 18, March 2005:  
Rights Based Programming with Children:  
an introduction.