

# Sustainable Development Goals: A Child Rights Perspective

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Sustainable Development Goals (post-2015): A booster for  
Child health and Children's Rights

ISSC

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# Where are we now in the development of the SDGs?

Three years of negotiations

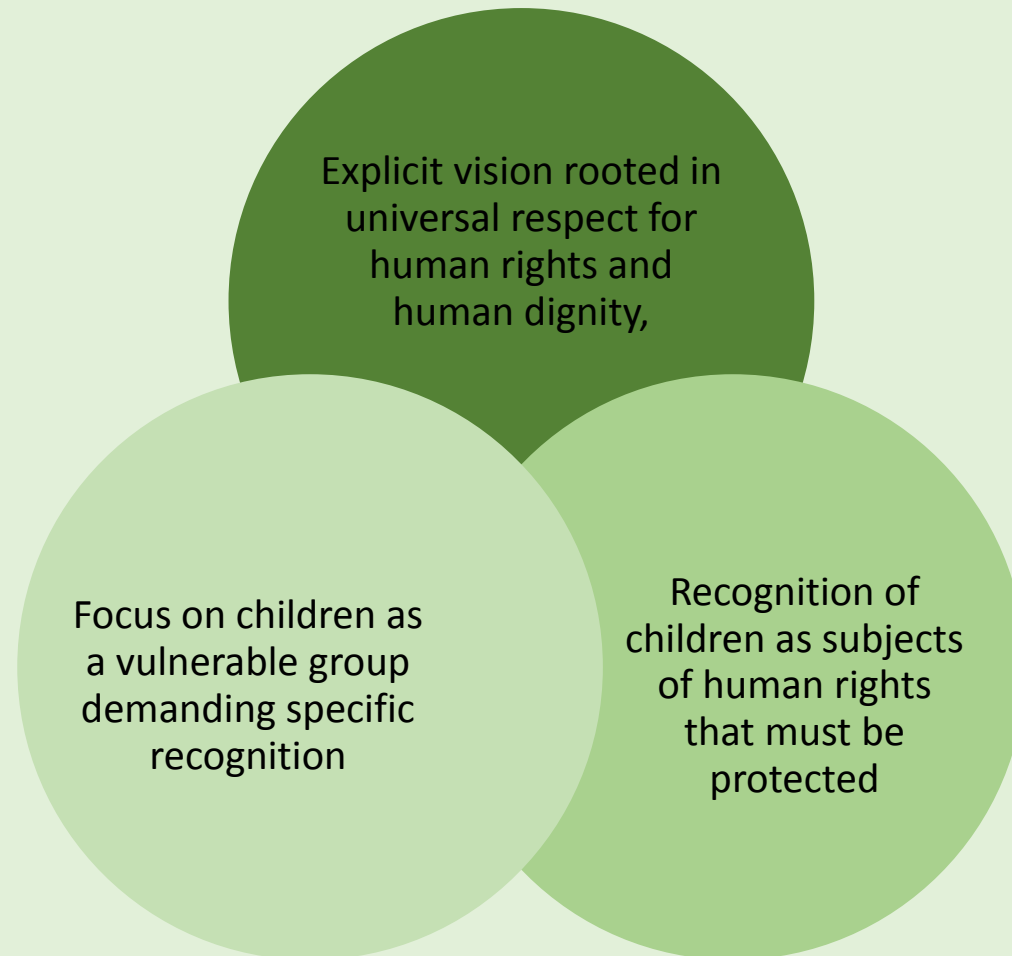
Post-2015 Development agenda has now been unanimously agreed at the UN

Heads of State will adopt at the Special SDG Summit in September

17 goals

15 years – till 2030 to achieve them

# Key advances on the MDGS



# 1) Narrative and commitment

- > No-one must be left behind - represent profound transformative shift
- > Getting to Zero - commitment to end extreme poverty and eliminate preventable child mortality
- > Integrating social, economic and environmental issues - a more rounded vision of sustainable development
- > Universality - all Goals apply to all countries, breaking-down 'us and them' barriers

## 2) New normative content

- > Governance, peaceful and inclusive societies
- > Discrimination against women and girls
- > Sexual & reproductive health
- > Ending violence against children
- > Equity
- > Climate Change

## 3) Ownership

- > Goals have been shaped and agreed by all
- > Participatory process in UN history - negotiated over 3 years involving global citizens, civil society and all Member States
- > Not an imposed agenda on governments - having designed this global plan of action, they now have a duty to deliver on it

# Why children

- > There are large numbers of children with urgent development needs
- > The MDGs left unfinished business for children
- > A focus on children will resonate with the global public

# Implications for children's rights

- > Right to life and development: Every child should experience optimum health and well being
- > Right to education: Every child should have access to a quality and inclusive education and achieve effective outcomes
- > Right to protection from all forms of violence: No child should live in fear and insecurity

# Every child should experience optimum health and well being

- > End preventable deaths of under 5s
- > End AIDS, TB, malaria and other communicable diseases
- > Reduce incidence of non-communicable diseases
- > Provide universal access to water and sanitation
- > Ensure universal access to healthcare
- > Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services
- > Halve death and injuries from traffic accidents

# Key implications

- > Goes far beyond the MDGS
- > Focus on all children not just under 5s
- > Takes on board far wider range of health risks to children and young people
- > Requires recognition of rights of adolescents to SRH services
- > Access to universal health care challenging but consistent with the CRC
- > Need for recognition of wider determinants of health - beyond health care services

# Every child should have access to a quality and inclusive education and achieve effective outcomes

- > Inclusive and equitable quality education for all
- > Universal pre-primary, primary and secondary education
- > Effective learning outcomes
- > Upgraded facilities - child, disability and gender sensitive
- > Safe, non-violent and inclusive environments for all

# Key implications

- > Significantly extends scope of MDGs
- > Recognition of importance of quality and respect for dignity and human rights within school
- > Focus on inclusion
- > Acknowledgement of the physical and sanitation barriers to education
- > Makes connections between violence and education

# No child should live in fear and insecurity

- > End abuse, trafficking and all forms of violence against children
- > End harmful practices eg child, early and forced marriage and FGM
- > End child labour and recruitment of child soldiers
- > Universal birth registration
- > Safe learning environments
- > Ensure access to justice

# Key implications

- > Completely new goal - not present in MDGs
- > Demonstrates growing awareness of significance and prevalence of violence in children's lives
- > Requires political support, the promotion of norms, and behavioural change
- > Abolition of child labour divides opinion
- > Important recognition of birth registration as a protective process
- > Protection not possible without access to justice

# No easy task.....

## Health

Track record of delivering

Robust evidence base for child survival

Poorer evidence base for non-communicable disease

## Education

Many education systems in crisis

Poor outcomes in both access and quality

Lack of international urgency

## Protection

Growing political will

Increasingly an international priority

Little evidence of effective interventions

# Making it happen

## Preamble

*'We want to secure the participation of all people and groups, including children, in the realisation of the new Goals and targets'*

## Goal 16

*'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'*

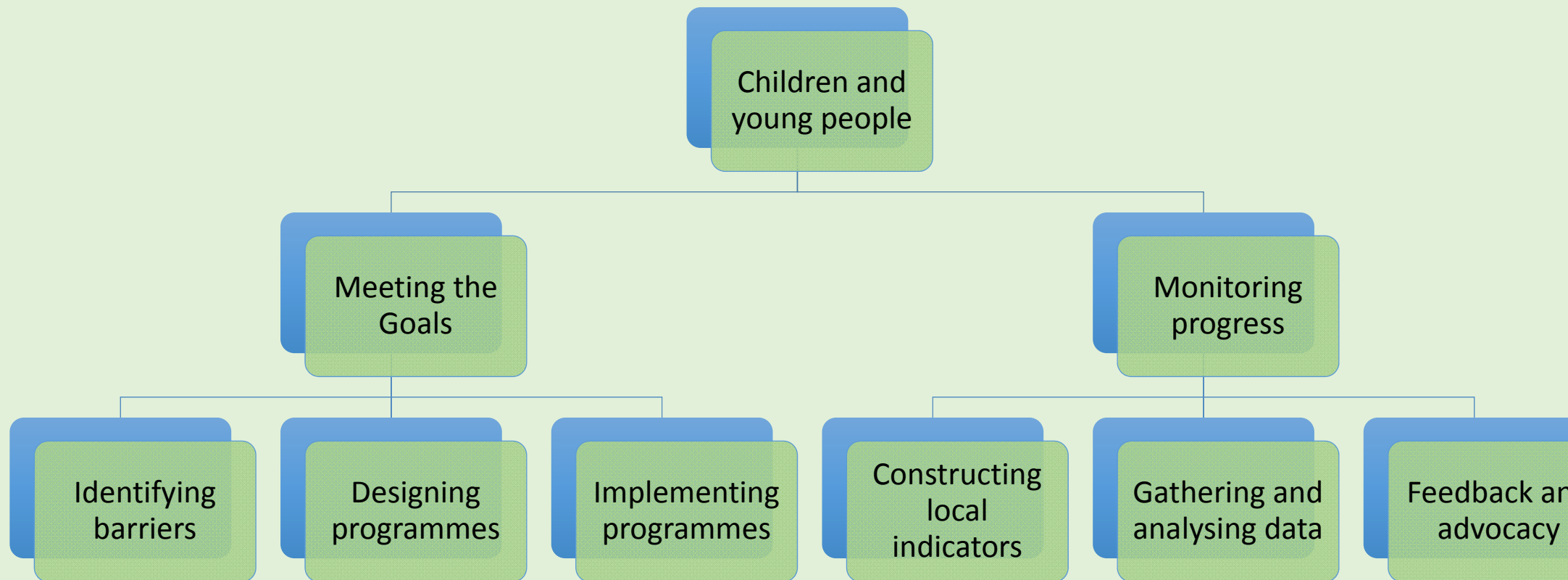
... in other words, the SDGs commit to a participatory process for achieving Goals and targets.....

.....and children are recognised as part of the process....

# Accountability to and with children

- > Children and young people are key stakeholders in the post-2015 agenda
- > Children have a role to play in realising the Goals
- > Not enough to set goals and targets - must be accountable governance in implementation of Goals
- > Mechanisms for accountability must be comprehensive, transparent, inclusive, accessible, and participatory

# Involvement of children and young people



# Action needed by all stakeholders

- > Set up meaningful, inclusive, accessible, collaborative and responsive ways to engage children
- > Tackle the barriers
- > Strengthen the capacity of public officials
- > Provide information
- > Promote innovations in technology that support participatory monitoring and accountability.
- > Take precautions to minimize the risk to children

# Action needed by governments

- > Establish and strengthen formal and informal spaces for children
- > Create an enabling environment
- > Support social accountability mechanisms that allow children and young people to keep track of progress
- > Strengthen investment and capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate timely, disaggregated data
- > Provide children with relevant, age-appropriate information on matters that affect them
- > Guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly as well as the freedom of the media in law and practice

# Action needed by civil society, donors and UN Agencies

- > Support the information literacy of children and young people
- > Amplify bottom-up, child-led monitoring and accountability
- > Build countries' capacity to implement and monitor the post-2015 agenda, including through social accountability that engages children and young people.

# Challenges

- > Lack of a holistic vision for delivering to children
- > Difficulties in reaching the most marginalised and vulnerable
- > Indicators
- > Invisibility of boys
- > Seriousness of commitment
  - > Collaboration
  - > Resources
  - > Respecting human rights and freedoms

# Conclusion

- > Process of agreeing the Goals has been open and more democratic
- > Highly ambitious and wide-ranging - both a strength and a weakness
- > Children's rights more clearly articulated and recognised within the goals
- > Will require huge co-ordinated efforts if progress is to be achieved
- > Imperative that governments are held to account at local, regional, national levels