

Still more work to do on child rights, according to UNICEF report

By Ashlee Betteridge

UNICEF has [released](#) its annual State of the World's Children report, focusing on the importance of using data and evidence to tackle child poverty. The report also marks the 25th anniversary of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC).

The data in the report shows significant progress has been made over the last three decades, with about 90 million more children living past the age of 5.1 than if child mortality rates had stuck at their 1990 levels. The report also showed significant drops in deaths from preventable diseases such as measles, as well as growth in nutrition, access to improved sanitation and primary school enrolments.

But the report also details ongoing violations of children's rights, such as high rates of child labour (affecting 15% of children), child marriage (11% of girls are married before they turn 15) and ongoing problems with violence against children at home and at school.

Looking at the data from across the Asia-Pacific region, great strides have been made in dropping under-5 mortality. However many Pacific countries are really lagging on birth registration, an area of focus for the report—for some countries such as PNG, Fiji and Solomon Islands there isn't even any data. Other countries in the region such as Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are only registering around half of births. A couple of countries, namely Marshall Islands and Kiribati, are doing much better, registering more than 90 per cent of births.

On a related note, if you have one of those people in your life who tries to equate saving children's lives with overpopulation, development data guru Hans Rosling has just released a new video that might be useful.

About the author/s

Ashlee Betteridge

Ashlee Betteridge was the Manager of the Development Policy Centre until April 2021. She was previously a Research Officer at the centre from 2013-2017. A former journalist, she holds a Master of Public Policy (Development Policy) from ANU and has development experience in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. She now works as a development consultant.