



Book Review

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Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed – Progress Report 2013

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UNICEF has committed to producing an annual progress report on child survival in support of “Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed global movement”. The reports are intended to track progress and promote accountability for global commitments made to children. The 2013 progress report is the second report in the series. It covers:

- Trends and levels in under-five mortality over the past two decades.
- Analysis of progress towards MDG 4.
- Causes of and intervention against child mortality.
- Highlights of national and global initiatives by governments, civil society, and the private sector to accelerate progress on child survival.
- Statistical tables of child mortality and causes of under-five deaths by country and UNICEF regional classification.

This 2013 progress report is released in conjunction with the child mortality estimates of the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation. Key messages of the report are as follows:

- Despite rapid progress in reducing child deaths since 1990, the world is still failing to renew the promise of survival for its most vulnerable citizens.
- Without faster progress on reducing preventable deaths, the world will not meet its child survival goal (MDG 4) until 2028—13 years after the deadline—and 35 million children will die between 2015 and 2028 who would otherwise have lived had the goal been met on time.
- Of the 6.6 million under-five deaths in 2012, most were from preventable causes such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, or malaria; around 49 per cent of deaths in children under five occurred during the neonatal period.

- Accelerating progress in child survival urgently requires greater attention to ending preventable child deaths in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, which together accounts for four out of five under-five deaths globally.
- West and Central Africa in particular require a special focus for child survival, as this region is lagging behind all other regions, including Eastern and Southern Africa; the region has seen virtually no reduction in its annual number of child deaths since 1990.
- The good news is that much faster progress is possible. Country experience shows that sharp reduction in preventable child deaths is possible at all levels of national income and in all regions.

The report concludes by pledge to promote, encourage, and advocate **“Ten life saving acts for children”**. The second half of the report presents the country and regional estimates of child mortality and causes of under-five deaths. The report recognises that leadership, commitment, and accountability are vital if we are to end preventable child deaths and that child survival is increasingly recognised as a shared responsibility, with many parties having a role to play.

The report has been well produced and the information and tables are easy to understand. It provides vital information that will contribute useful information for all countries, governments, and policy makers. Such information will facilitate the identification of similar problems in these respective countries, and allow easy reference to potential problems with suggested solutions illustrated by various success stories.

About the book:

UNICEF. *Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed – Progress Report 2013*
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http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/APR_Progress_Report_2013_9_Sept_2013.pdf