**Submission to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the implementation of the technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach on prevention of child mortality**

[**(A/HRC/RES/27/31)**](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/27/31)

**April 2016**

Save the Children is the world’s leading independent organisation for children, working in 120 countries through our members, programmes and partners. Our mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Save the Children has a dual mandate as a development and humanitarian agency, covering issues such as health and nutrition, education, poverty, child protection and child rights governance. This submission contains practical examples and activities undertaken by Save the Children that relates to the application of a human rights-based approach to the reduction and elimination of preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age.

# Rights-based efforts to reduce child mortality and morbidity

Save the Children’s rights-based efforts to reduce child mortality and morbidity have focused on strengthening countries capacities to raise domestic resources that could then be allocated to address child mortality, as well as on opening spaces for children, adolescents and their caregivers to meaningfully participate in the decision-making processes which affect children’s survival and health.

# Budgeting

Working together with international organizations, civil society, children and communities, Save the Children has undertaken several activities to improve policy commitments and to monitor budget allocation to address child mortality (paragraph 56).

* In **Peru**, the provincial and regional government is working together with civil society to improve policy commitments and resource allocation to early childhood care and development (ECCD) in Ccasapata in Huancavelica. Based on regional commitments to children and adolescents and provincial plans for ECCD, government officials and civil society actors meet regularly to ensure the provision of resources and implementation of agreed plans. As a result, the regional government of Huancavelica has since 2010 allocated 10% of its budget annually[[1]](#footnote-1)[1] to the health of mothers and newborns and maternal mortality rates have been reduced from 23 in 2010 to 5 in 2014.
* Through the Child-Friendly Budget Initiative in **Zimbabwe**, Save the Children, the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations and UNICEF have supported child led groups in eight of Zimbabwe’s 10 provinces to engage in pre-budget consultations. Members of the child-led groups have been trained on children’s rights, legislative framework, the budget process, advocacy skills and project management. Children have then analyzed the budget and influenced national and local government on their budget priorities.  As a result, national and local governments have increased budget allocations to health and education and set aside budgets to support child participation at local level.
* Save the Children, Social Watch and WomanHealth have been supporting children and young people in the **Philippines** to participate in the Health Cluster of the Alternative Budget Initiative (ABI). As part of this process, children and young people analyze the national health budget with the support of ABI Health Cluster members. The children’s analysis was published in the ABI’s 2015 Alternative Budget (*Paggugol na Matuwid, Kaunlaran Para sa Naiwan*)[[2]](#footnote-2)[2], which has been a key reference of Congress and some government departments in making decisions related to the national budget. The Department of Health also held dialogues with the children and young people about the 2015 budget.
* In **Tanzania**, Save the Children supported children in seven districts to join more than 900 Children’s Councils. With improved understanding of children’s rights and the budget process, children from these Councils engaged with district officials to present their priorities. As a result, six out of the seven district councils planned for increased child focused resource allocation in the 2011/12 budgets, which improved school feeding programmes and resulted in the recruitment of additional teachers. Dialogue between children and local government officials also contributed to establishing mechanisms for children to influence local governance.
* International policy commitments and human rights/child rights obligations together with civil society informed recommendations from human rights mechanisms can assist in spurring action and ensuring accountability for investment in the rights of the child. During the second UPR of **Zambia** in 2012, the Government of Zambia accepted several recommendations relating to budget allocation for maternal and child health. The UPR recommendations on the health budget have helped reinforce national advocacy efforts carried out by Save the Children and its partners, leading to an increase in the national budget for the health sector from 9.3% in 2012 to 11.3% in 2013.[[3]](#footnote-3)[7]

# Monitoring and Evaluation

Save the Children has worked actively on involving citizens and children in monitoring and evaluation processes with the aim to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability in service delivery.

* Save the Children in **Mozambique**, in collaboration with other local and international organizations, implements the Citizens’ Engagement Project (CEP) aimed at promoting public participation in monitoring health and education service delivery in four provinces. Children are actively involved in the project, especially in monitoring delivery of education services. Using the scorecard methodology, citizens monitor quality of health and education service delivery and hold public officials and service providers to account. Action plans to address issues and gaps identified are monitored by School Councils[[4]](#footnote-4)[3], and the Health Facility Co-Management Committees[[5]](#footnote-5)[4]. Citizen participation in monitoring public services is supported by a specific law in Mozambique[[6]](#footnote-6)[5]. Preliminary results point to increased collaboration between citizens and public officials as well as improved efficiency, transparency and accountability in service delivery.[[7]](#footnote-7)[6]
* In 2015, Save the Children with other civil society organisations organised the Global Citizens’ Dialogue in Geneva. A key objective of the [Citizens’ Hearing](http://www.citizens-post.org/global-citizens-hearing-report/)s movement is to strengthen the feedback loop between global processes and local and national decision-making processes. A Youth Ambassador from Tanzania who was part of the Children’s Council in Handeni, **Tanzania**, where he lives, and was elected by the other children part of the Children’s Council to represent their voice and participated to this event in Geneva. In the Global Citizens’ Dialogue the Youth Ambassador from Tanzania advocated for reduction of maternal and child mortality through better provision of maternal, newborn and child health services and elimination of child marriage The Citizens’ Hearings have provided a critical input in identifying priorities and in urging governments to respond to it. Involving children and youth was crucial to bring their voices to the attention of key stakeholders including communities, civil society, journalists and government representatives and to inform policies and implementation priorities at local, national and international levels.[[8]](#footnote-8)
1. [1] Ministry of Economy and Finances, SIAF (2014), Regional budget for specific items [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [2] Alternative Budget Initiative and Social Watch Philippines (2015), *Alternative Budget FY 2015: Paggugol na Matuwid, Kaunlaran Para sa Naiwan* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [7] Save the Children (2014), *Universal Periodic Review: Successful examples of child rights advocacy*, <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/library/universal-periodic-review-successful-examples-child-rights-advocacy> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [3] MINED (2008) Regulamento Geral do Ensino Básico (General norms for Basic Education) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [4] MISAU (2012) Terms of Reference for Establishment and Management of Health Facility Co-Management Committees [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [5] Law 7/2012 – Basis for Organization and Functionality of State Entities [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [6] Save the Children (2015), *Progress report for CEP* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Citizen’s Hearing Global report*, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)