

4. CONCLUSIONS

This report has outlined the rationale and background to the set of indicator profiles that is included on the CD-ROM. Whilst acknowledging from the start the urgent need for action to tackle the immense problems of children's environmental health, it has argued that information alone is not enough. Information needs to be relevant and reliable if it is to be effective. And even the best information will only be effective if it is used by people who are open to the messages it tries to convey.

Given this context, indicators can certainly be useful tools for understanding and action. If they are to guide us to make better choices and take more informed action, however, they need to be designed logically, openly and honestly. We need to recognize their limitations and not fool ourselves by believing in them too much. We must be aware that they merely hint at some answers and do not tell us all we need to know. We need to accept that though they may point us in the direction we should travel it is we who have to take the road.

The indicators on the enclosed CD-ROM are therefore only the signpost for our journey; they are nowhere near the end-point. To contribute anything, they must now be allowed to leap off the page and be put to work. First, this means that they must be matched against the needs of those they have to serve – and that is not the user, but the children they are intended to help, globally, nationally, locally. Second, they must be trialled and tested, using the data that are available, so that they can be adapted and improved as necessary to meet specific needs. Then they need to be constructed, implemented and applied. Finally, we must take note of what they tell us, and act accordingly.

All these things need to be done urgently, for while we wait children suffer and die. So the indicators we present here are not an end or an answer, but a beginning and a challenge. The challenge is this: seek, listen and respond, for millions of children are calling.

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6. WEB-BASED DATA SOURCES

Demographic and Health Surveys

<http://www.measuredhs.com>

UNICEF – Research and Evaluation

<http://www.unicef.org/reseval/index.html>

UNICEF – Child Survival and Health Statistics

<http://childinfo.org/eddb/health.htm>

UNEP – Global Environmental Outlook Data Compendium

<http://geocompendium.grid.unep.ch/>

United Nations – Millennium Indicators Database

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_goals.asp

World Bank - Living Standards Measurement Study

<http://www.worldbank.org/html/prdph/lsmst/>

World Health Organization – A Guide to Statistical Information

<http://www.who.int/research/en/>

World Resources Institute – The Environmental Information Portal

<http://earthtrends.wri.org/>

ANNEX: OVERVIEW OF INDICATORS FOR

	CONTEXTS	EXPOSURES
PERINATAL DISEASES	Children aged 0-14 years living in poverty	Famine risk People living in informal settlements Women of childbearing age who are malnourished Women of childbearing age working in unregulated workplaces Births to mothers living in unsafe or hazardous housing
RESPIRATORY DISEASES	Children aged 0-14 years living in poverty	Children aged 0-14 years living in unsafe, unhealthy or hazardous housing Overcrowding Children aged 0-14 years living in proximity to heavily trafficked roads Mean annual exposure of children aged 0-4 years to atmospheric particulate pollution Children aged 0-4 years living in households using biomass fuels or coal as the main source of heating and cooking Children aged 0-14 years living in households in which at least one adult smokes on a regular basis Intrauterine growth retardation in newborn children
DIARRHOEAL DISEASES	Children aged 0-14 years living in poverty	Drinking water supplies failing national microbiological water quality standards People living in informal settlements Children aged 0-14 years living in disaster-affected areas Children aged 0-14 years living in households without basic services for water supply, sanitation and hygiene
INSECT-BORNE DISEASES	Population growth rate in areas endemic for insect-borne diseases	Total area of insect vector habitats Children aged 0-14 years living in households providing suitable conditions for insect-borne disease transmission Children aged 0-14 years living in areas endemic for insect-borne diseases
PHYSICAL INJURIES	Children aged 0-14 years living in poverty	People living in informal settlements Children aged 0-14 years living in disaster-affected areas Children aged 0-14 years living in proximity to heavily trafficked roads Children aged 0-14 years involved in routine employment Children aged 0-14 years living in unsafe, unhealthy or hazardous housing Children aged 0-14 years living in homes lacking access to a piped water supply

CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

HEALTH OUTCOMES	ACTIONS
<p>Perinatal mortality rate</p> <p>Intrauterine growth retardation in newborn children</p> <p>Congenital malformations requiring surgical correction in children under 1 year of age</p>	<p>Women of childbearing age within one hour's travel of specialist maternity and perinatal care</p> <p>Attributable change in number of households lacking basic services</p> <p>Prevalence of stunting in children aged 0-4 years</p>
<p>Mortality rate for children aged 0-4 years due to acute respiratory illness</p> <p>Morbidity rate for children aged 0-4 years due to acute respiratory illness</p> <p>Prevalence of chronic respiratory illnesses in children aged 0-14 years</p>	<p>Attributable change in tobacco consumption</p> <p>Attributable change in atmospheric pollutant concentrations</p> <p>Attributable change in numbers of households relying on biomass fuels or coal as the main source of heating or cooking</p>
<p>Diarrhoea mortality rate in children aged 0-4 years</p> <p>Diarrhoea morbidity rate in children aged 0-4 years</p> <p>Recurrence rate of outbreaks of diarrhoeal disease among children aged 0-4 years</p>	<p>Attributable change in the number of households lacking basic services</p> <p>Attributable change in the number of food outlets failing food hygiene standards</p> <p>Children aged 0-4 years able to obtain rehydration therapy within 24 hours of need</p>
<p>Mortality rate of children aged 0-4 years due to insect-borne diseases</p> <p>Prevalence of insect-borne diseases in children aged 0-14 years</p>	<p>At-risk children aged 0-14 years covered by effective, integrated vector control and management systems</p>
<p>Mortality rate of children aged 0-14 years due to physical injuries</p> <p>Incidence of physical injuries to children aged 0-14 years requiring treatment</p>	<p>Children aged 0-14 years living within reach of specialist emergency medical services</p> <p>Attributable change in physical injuries to children aged 0-14 years requiring treatment</p>

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