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the "100 Best Swedish Websites", ranking highest in the charity websites category.

One new feature of the site is a section which provides continual reports and updates from areas where we are engaged in emergency relief; visitors to the site can see what work we are doing, and exactly how the money from the Emergency Relief Fund is being used.

Media and PR

Save the Children is often called upon by the media to discuss questions concerning children's life situation, and the risks to which children are vulnerable. Our long history of commitment to children's rights has enabled us to build up an invaluable fund of knowledge and experience, which we are happy to share. At the same time, being in the media gives us an opportunity to inform the public about children's circumstances, influence decision-makers and public opinion, and reinforce our campaign messages.

Accumulated experience of children's rights

We produce information and campaign material to assist the local branches in their advocacy work. We also publish reports, studies and other kinds of documentary material to illuminate the kinds of circumstances children are facing.

Among the publications issued in 2008 was the book "Skiljas – barnen berättar" (in Swedish only; the title means "Divorce – children's story"). The book is based on the accounts of over 700 children aged between six and eighteen with divorced parents; the children were in e-mail correspondence with Save the Children Sweden via the site www.skiljas.rb.se, and several of them also attended individual counselling sessions or took part in support groups. Many children whose parents are in the throes of getting divorced have no-one to talk to, and feel very lonely and abandoned with their thoughts and emotions.

This book, and our other publications (including a range of titles in English) are available from our online bookshop, at www.bokhandel.rb.se.

R.O.I.

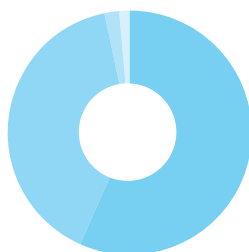
(Return On Investment)

Över trehundra tusen barnsoldater deltar idag i konflikter runtom i världen. Det är trehundra tusen för många, men ändå färre än på många år. Vårt långsiktiga arbete med lagstiftning, avväpning och rehabilitering ger resultat. I vår och sommar riktar vi speciellt fokus på barn i krig- och katastrofområden. Låt därför årets sommarhälsning till kollegor och kunder bli en gåva till stöd för vårt arbete. Der är vad vi kallar väl investerade pengar.
Ge oss din företagsgåva på www.raddabarnen.se

Radda Barnen
Save the Children Sweden

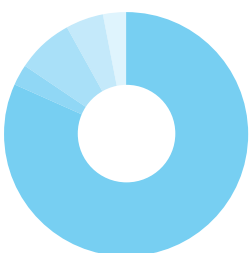
The fund of confidence we have built up over the years is now bearing fruit in the form of increased interest from companies with regard to entering into long-term and wide-ranging collaborative partnerships with us.

Financial summary 2008



Income MSEK	2008	2007
Funds raised	392,5	319,1
Grants from Sida*, EU etc.	275,9	245,4
Results from financial investments		20,7
Membership fees	13,9	14,6
Miscellaneous (sales of books, seminars)	8,3	7,9
Total	690,6	607,7

*The Swedish Agency for International Development



Expenses MSEK	2008	2007
Programme operations	561,3	501,8
Fundraising	52,3	45,2
Administration	33,4	30,2
Results from financial investments	21	
Members activities	19,3	19,4
Total	687,3	596,6

Communication

and fundraising

The two keystones of our market communication are ethics and results. We seek to avoid portraying children as victims, and we indicate the solutions to problems.

We do not copy other organisations; we strive to emphasise our identity, create a broader understanding among the public of what Save the Children does, and demonstrate the results we achieve.

Save the Children is the Swedish charity which is seen to be the most effective at bringing about lasting change for children on an international level. With regard to the corresponding work within Sweden, we take second place after the organisation Children's Rights in Society (generally known by its Swedish acronym, BRIS).

The Save the Children brand is known and respected: 99 per cent of the public know about us, and roughly 40 per cent say that they think of Save the Children first when asked to think of a charity. We are seen to have a high level of credibility, competence, commitment and reliability.

However, we are not quite as good at communicating how we work and with which questions, so we strove to redress this in our communication throughout 2008. These efforts were successful – awareness that Save the Children works with children's rights rose by 7 per cent, from 43 to 52 per cent.

Advertising

Save the Children is the Swedish public's number one choice of charity to which they donate money – 24 per cent say that Save the Children is the charity to which they give first.

When we ask our established donors, and the general public, to donate money, they often want to decide for themselves which initiative the money is to be used for, and many want to know how it was spent. However, over 73 per cent feel they can trust Save the Children to channel money to where it is most needed.

In 2008 we carried out several general campaigns aimed at spreading knowledge, shaping public opinion and stimulating an increase in donations. We evaluate all our campaigns, in order to ascertain how good we are at getting Save the Children's messages across. During 2008 we communicated the following campaign themes:

- Children's right to be free of violence in public places.
- Children's right to be free of mistreatment and physical punishment.
- Children's right to education. An important element of this campaign was "Rewrite the Future", the first international campaigning collaboration between several national Save the Children organisations, aimed at giving millions of children caught up in conflicts and natural disasters the opportunity to go to school.

Private fundraising

During 2008 we succeeded in increasing the amount of money raised from private donors, and we worked to improve still further the efficiency of our fund-raising operations and make our communication more individually oriented.

We will be introducing a wider range of digital solutions during 2009. We have attracted new donors at the same time as we have retained our faithful supporters; as a result the total number of donors increased, while the average age of our donors fell by one year. We work constantly to become more cost-effective in our fund-raising – lower costs mean more money for our operations in the field.

Corporate fundraising

The fund of confidence we have built up over the years is now bearing fruit in the form of increased interest from companies with regard to entering into long-term and wide-ranging collaborative partnerships with us. Our main partners in 2008 were IKEA, SAS, the If insurance company, Semper, Swedbank, Santa Maria, Banco Fonder (ethical investments), and the Swedish Postcode Lottery. In addition to our main partners

we have close relationships with approximately 20 other companies, such as Accenture, e-on, Trelleborg, Wallenius, God El, Handelsbanken Finans, Calligraphen, etc.

Save the Children Sweden and IKEA have worked together since 1993 on issues concerning children's rights and child labour. Today, this collaboration has grown and been extended to the whole of the International Save the Children Alliance. IKEA Sweden also provides additional support to Save the Children Sweden; every time a holder of an IKEA Family card swipes their membership card at an IKEA store, IKEA donates 25 öre to three of Save the Children Sweden's domestic projects (children and divorce, the parents' helpline and the parents' online help service).

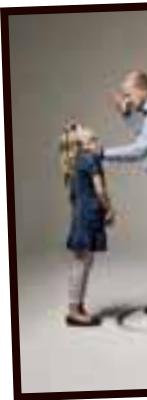
The Postcode Lottery

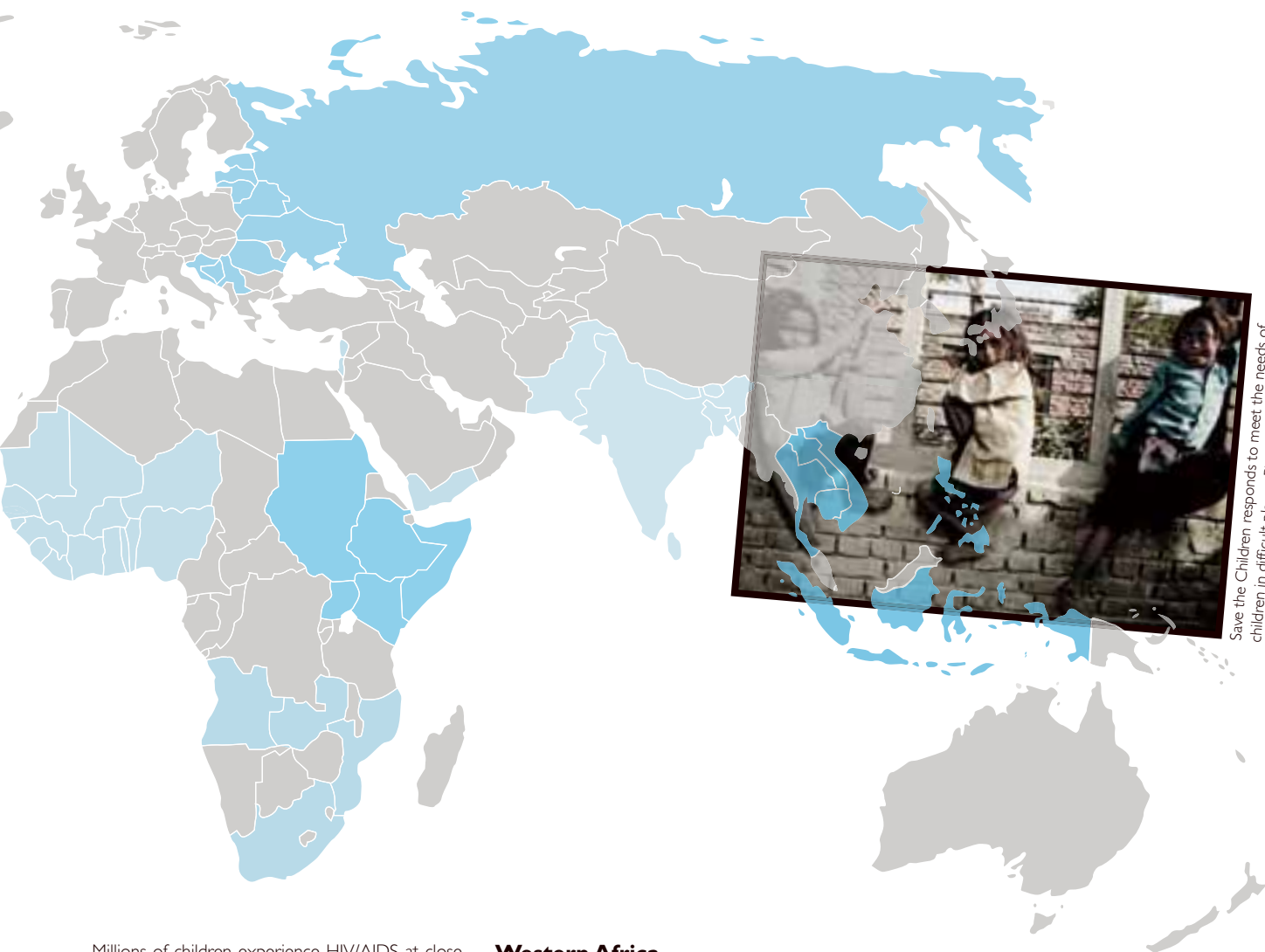
Once more, our expectations with regard to funds raised via the Postcode Lottery were exceeded: Save the Children Sweden received SEK 50 million of the 350 million that was shared out among charities.

"The money from the Postcode Lottery has contributed to the financing of a large number of projects", says Secretary General Elisabeth Dahlin. "Our most important concerns are to make sure that all children have the chance to go to school, and to do what we can to enable all children to have a violence-free life; most of the money from the Postcode Lottery is channelled into projects in these areas."

Website

2008 saw the launch of a thoroughly revamped version of our website, www.rb.se, which has an English-language section at www.savethechildren.se. The updated site is more informative and interactive, and is primarily addressed to donors, journalists and child-care professionals. The site is our principal channel of external communication; we have made it easier to donate money online, and the site provides clear presentations of ongoing campaigns. Shortly after it went live, the new website was included in the Internetworld magazine's list of





Save the Children responds to meet the needs of children in difficult places. Photo Morten Sverringsen.

Millions of children experience HIV/AIDS at close quarters. In our work to combat HIV/AIDS we spread information on young people's sexual rights, and arrange discussion groups where boys can talk about HIV, masculinity and gender equality.

In 2008 Save the Children worked to strengthen local partner organisations which work to promote children's rights, and we set up a regional Children's Rights Forum which enables child rights organisations to exchange knowledge and experiences, and pool their resources to put pressure on governments and decision-makers.

Southern and Central Asia

Uneven resource distribution, ongoing conflicts, and severe natural disasters mean that this is a region where it is very hard to ensure respect for children's rights.

During the year we continued our successful advocacy initiatives aimed at mobilising parents, politicians, religious leaders and governments to work to promote children's rights. Together with local partner organisations we worked to increase understanding of children's rights among Muslim groups. Education was a focus area, and we worked with the issues of quality and non-discrimination at school.

Save the Children helped to provide disaster relief in Nepal, India and Pakistan, and monitored children's rights in relation to the conflict in Sri Lanka.

Western Africa

In Western Africa, where many countries are afflicted by war, natural disaster and political crisis, the rights of the child are not respected, protected and fulfilled. Our collaboration with the military and police continued in 2008, as we provided training on children's rights.

We train teachers, and carry out opinion-building measures, with the aim of ensuring that all children get the chance to go to school. It is still often the case that pregnant girls and children with disabilities are not allowed to attend school.

Within the framework of the "Rewrite the Future" education campaign we repaired and renovated many schools and provided training for teachers. And we distributed learning materials to teachers and pupils so that children in the war-torn Ivory Coast could start going to school again. During the year we worked together with several children's rights coalitions in the region, which monitor how well each country lives up to the CRC.

Eastern and Central Africa

Eastern and Central Africa is one of the world's poorest regions; it is beset by armed conflicts, internal disturbances and rampant levels of HIV/AIDS. Large numbers of children do not go to school, and many are subjected to exploitation and abuse.

During the year Sudan ratified the African equivalent of the CRC, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and Southern Sudan decided it will introduce a new child welfare act. Save the Children played an active part in shaping opinion on these issues, and acted as an advisor on both decisions. Also in Sudan, our collaboration with the government on studies into children's situation has given us greater influence in issues concerning child welfare.

In Kenya, disturbances broke out in connection with the presidential election, and in Chad and DR Congo the ongoing conflicts intensified. Save the Children was present on the ground in all three countries, and channelled funds from Sida (the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency) to local partner organisations.

During the year the country office for Southern Sudan was moved from Nairobi in Kenya to Juba, in Southern Sudan. We now have seven field offices in the country, from which we work in three states.

Our work on education and protection in areas affected by conflict continues. Ensuring children start their education early has proved to be an effective means of preventing them from being recruited as child soldiers or being forced into marriage.

Save the Children worldwide

Our international work is carried out in eight regions around the world, in collaborative partnership with some 330 local and national organisations. The following gives a brief description of our work in the different regions.

Europe

Recent years have seen an increase in the number of states that are members of the EU, with more countries waiting to join. During 2008 we worked to strengthen our partner organisations' knowledge of and contacts with the institutions of the EU. In the countries that are not EU members we continued to provide our partner organisations with economic and organisational support. One feature of the work has been to raise all our partners' awareness of how important it is to find ways of raising money to finance their own operations.

The joint action between the Baltic states to combat bullying continued during the year, and towards the end of the year plans were finalised to extend this initiative to Ukraine. An organisation in Poland provided capacity development relating to online bullying.

In October we organised, together with actors such as UNICEF, Euronet and Save the Children Romania, the fifth NGO Forum for National Children's Rights Organisations. The meeting brought together national coalitions for the rights of the child from more than twenty different countries to discuss follow-up of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other important issues.

Latin America

Big differences in income and the uneven distribution of resources mean that for many children and adults in Latin America, life is a constant struggle just to meet basic requirements – food, accommodation, health and education. In 2008 we continued to work together with our local partners to protect and promote children's rights. In connection with the World Congress against the Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Brazil during the year, partner organisations joined forces to intensify their advocacy work vis-à-vis the general public, the media and decision-makers.

Children expressed their own anxiety about the Internet and its negative consequences, in particular child pornography, and set up a regional network with the aim of spreading understanding of how to use information technology safely.

In the light of the fact that there are now three countries in Latin America which have laws prohibiting physical and humiliating punishment (Costa Rica, Uruguay and Venezuela) Save the Children and its partner organisations are working to develop strategies for ensuring that the legislation is applied.

The Middle East and North Africa

Parts of this region – the Middle East and Yemen – are affected by conflict and warlike situations, while the countries of North Africa and the Gulf region are characterised by relative stability. One thing that all the countries in the region have in common is the need to increase awareness of the CRC.

Save the Children has played an important part in encouraging legislation on children's right to safety and protection in Lebanon, the occupied Palestinian territories and Yemen. During the year we worked to combat violence against children, domestic violence and physical and humiliating punishment at school, and ran several advocacy campaigns targeted on the public, the media and decision-makers.

Save the Children Sweden is an important regional actor in the field of emergency relief, together with UN bodies and other members of the Alliance. In 2008 we played an active role during the conflict in Yemen and Israel's attacks on Gaza. Our work to create child-friendly spaces is a successful method for ensuring, for example, that children in areas hit by catastrophes continue to receive their education.

South-East Asia

Many countries in this region have experienced strong economic growth over recent years – but nevertheless, it is a part of the world that is still afflicted by widespread poverty, gender discrimination, the continuing spread of HIV/AIDS, migration and trafficking. Mistreatment of children is a common occurrence, and the area is also severely affected by natural disasters.

Save the Children Sweden took part in relief work following the Nargis cyclone in Burma, in China following the Sichuan earthquake, and in Vietnam and the Philippines after these countries had been hit by major cyclones. We have also worked on disaster-prevention measures in which children play a central role.

We have continued our long-term work to spread knowledge about children's rights and about alternatives to physical punishment in schools. In the Philippines we support the work of civil society to help children who have been subjected to violence and sexual exploitation. Our partner organisations monitor the observance of the CRC in the region, and together we strive to influence authorities to look after the best interests of the child.

Southern Africa

The majority of the 60 million children in Southern Africa live in poverty. Save the Children works together with local organisations to try to change this unjust state of affairs. With our support, local organisations in Zambia have persuaded the Zambian government to increase the funding allocated to school education.

We have worked to combat violence against children in South Africa; in Zambia we took part in a series of national conferences dealing with violence against children, and we have also taken part in national campaigns to combat child abuse.



Save the Children has contributed to ensuring that migrating children are included in the European Parliament's report dealing with fundamental human rights. Foto Robin Hammond, Panos Pictures.



In Vietnam, Save the Children has worked hard to train teachers in how to help children with special needs. Photo Elin Berge.

More knowledge means improved treatment of children with disabilities in Vietnam

In Vietnam, Save the Children has worked hard to train teachers in how to help children with special needs. We have also campaigned to bring about changes in attitudes towards children with disabilities.

"Our objective has been to make sure that children with disabilities can go to school, just like all other children", explains Hanh Ta Thuy, who is in charge of Save the Children's education work in Vietnam. One of the reasons why so many children with disabilities were, and still are, kept at home is that parents often feel a sense of shame at having a child with a disability, because they feel it is a punishment from God. As a result, they hide their children away at home. It's also frequently the case that schools refuse to accept children with disabilities, because they do not have the knowledge of how to meet their needs.

"A lot of our work is about meeting authorities and parents, in order to raise their awareness of children's rights", says Hanh Ta Thuy. "When we started our project, in 1991, only one per cent of all children with disabilities went to school; today, that figure has risen to twenty-six per cent for

the whole of Vietnam, and is between fifty and seventy per cent in the project's pilot area. It's a very positive increase, but nevertheless falls short of the government's target, which was that the national figure should be at least in the region of fifty per cent by this time."

Children and the EU

Via the Alliance's representation in Brussels, Save the Children has contributed to ensuring that migrating children are included in the European Parliament's report dealing with fundamental human rights. The report particularly emphasises the importance of ensuring that children have access to education, protection, health care and similar kinds of fundamental support. We also drew the Commission's attention to the needs of migrating children, in connection with the proposals for a new EU directive on discrimination. A major breakthrough in the report is that for the first time, the parliament is calling on all states which have not yet introduced legislation outlawing physical and humiliating punishment of children to do so. This is the first time an official EU document talks about the physical and humiliating punishment of children.

Advocacy for children's rights

Save the Children Sweden works to bring about lasting improvements in children's life conditions. A large part of our work is focused on trying to influence politicians and decision-makers to accord priority to the best interests of the child, and on mobilising public opinion.

We use the knowledge gained from our own practical initiatives to help children, and from fact-finding studies and other analyses. We highlight ways of strengthening respect for children's rights by describing good examples, but we also report on situations where children's rights are not respected. Our advocacy work consists of lobbying, shaping public opinion and disseminating knowledge.

Through the Alliance we work to mobilise public opinion in favour of children's rights at international and global level. This work is co-ordinated from the Alliance's offices in Geneva, Brussels and New York. A lot of what we do in this respect is concerned with providing knowledge and expertise about the conditions children face around the world, and endeavouring to ensure that government representatives and decision-makers at international organisations take this knowledge into account when framing decisions that affect children.

Latin America leads the way against physical and humiliating punishment

An example of how international advocacy in 2008 succeeded in strengthening children's rights is provided by the legislation passed in Costa Rica prohibiting the physical and humiliating punishment of children. In August of last year it became illegal to hit a child; Costa Rica thereby became the third Latin-American country to

introduce legislation against the physical and humiliating punishment of children.

In Costa Rica, the law previously allowed adults to hit children "within reason". Together with the Paniamor foundation, a Costa Rican partner organisation, Save the Children ran an extensive advocacy campaign between 2003 and 2008. This campaign was to a large extent targeted on the local community, and in the initial phase consisted of presenting information and shaping public opinion. After a while the campaign attracted strong support from the national authority with responsibility for children's issues, and also from Costa Rica's Children's Ombudsman. Having this support gave added weight to the campaign's ambition to change social and cultural attitudes towards physical and humiliating punishment of children, and helped raise the debate to the national stage.

A further success factor concerned gaining the backing of schools and health-care centres for the campaign, by presenting the arguments in favour of alternative methods of discipline for children. Church leaders, who traditionally are conservative in their views and have a great deal of influence on family matters in Latin America, were a further group it was important to win over. Step by step we succeeded in extending the influence of the campaign, and were able to change the attitudes of society. Paniamor organised courses and training initiatives for various groups within Costa Rica's public administration. Using educational material entitled *Educa sin Pegar* ("Bringing children up without smacking"), these courses were a further part of the process of explaining the message that there are alternatives to physical and humiliating punishment when bringing up children. This work has clearly been successful in its aim of bringing about change in the way Costa Rican society views this issue.

"This is something we have worked for for

such a long time", says Ulla Armyr, Regional Director for Save the Children Sweden in Latin America. "These laws making the corporal punishment of children illegal are strategically important for the whole region, they set an example for other states to follow."

Save the Children has carried out its advocacy on this issue in fifteen South-American countries, in partnership with some 100 local organisations. Now, with Costa Rica as the latest to join the list, a total of twenty-four countries around the world have national legislation outlawing the physical and humiliating punishment of children.

Child welfare shelters spotlight children's needs

What we call "child welfare shelters" are places where children who it is suspected have been subjected to criminal mistreatment can be given co-ordinated, integrated support. In 2008 we submitted an evaluation of the child welfare shelters to the Swedish government: this evaluation showed that, via the shelters, children receive a better hearing and better support in the ensuing legal process, and benefit from better psychosocial support while the legal inquiry into their case is carried out.

2008 saw an increase in the number of child welfare shelters in Sweden, from ten to fifteen. The National Police Board was instructed by the government to work together with the National Board of Forensic Medicine, the National Board of Health and Welfare, and the Swedish Prosecution Authority on a dual remit – to draw up national guidelines for collaboration and co-ordination between different authorities in cases where there is a suspicion that children have been subjected to criminal mistreatment; and to formulate criteria for what shelters must offer in order to call themselves child welfare shelters. These guidelines is a result of Save the Children's unrelenting advocacy on the issue.

Children are strong

On the night of 2 May 2008 the cyclone Nargis swept in over the lowland delta area of south-west Burma. Over one million people lost their homes, and more than 130,000 people died or disappeared. Tens of thousands of them were children.

Save the Children was one of the first organisations to reach the area. In addition to providing emergency relief, our job was to identify the nature of the situation faced by children in the wake of the disaster. This fact-finding provided a basis for the planning of rebuilding work.

Mari Mörth, Disaster Co-ordinator for Save the Children Sweden, co-ordinated the measures for children to make sure that they really did benefit those who were in most acute need. "Fortunately, Save the Children had had a presence in the country before the cyclone, which meant that we could respond quickly. We were immediately able to reach the hardest-hit areas with the most vital supplies", Mari says as she thinks back to the intensive work in Burma in spring 2008. "At that early stage the work was all about saving lives. Just think what a difference some pots and pans can make!"

Many children lost contact with their immediate families, so the large-scale task of trying to register these children as a step towards locating their parents was an important measure. "After a natural disaster, when the normal structures of a society have been destroyed, there's a much greater risk that children will come to harm, or be subjected to exploitation in various ways", Mari says. "Children are frightened in this kind of situation, and suffer anxiety and other psychological problems".

Most children remained in their villages, where they were looked after by relatives or neighbours. A lot of children were housed for long periods of time in temporary camps, or Buddhist monasteries, Christian churches and other kinds of community institution. Save the Children also set up child-friendly spaces under the supervision of calm, reliable adults where the children could play and relax. These safe havens are safe and secure environments to which children can go while their parents are at work, or repairing their homes or carrying out other tasks in rebuilding their families' lives. The adults in charge of the child-

friendly spaces are for example teachers from the village school, or some other local person the villagers trust. These adults receive training from Save the Children, and we also equip the havens with toys, books and drawing materials. The child-friendly spaces also provide an opportunity for monitoring how well the children's recovery is progressing. As Mari says, "It's important to keep following up how the children are doing for a long time after the actual disaster."

In the months following the cyclone few children had access to school. Most school buildings were destroyed by the cyclone, or washed away by the tidal wave that followed it. Save the Children set up a number of temporary schools, and started work repairing the old ones.

Children are more vulnerable than usual after a catastrophe. Their lives have been turned upside-down, the predictable security of their home life has gone. It is important that children are given an explanation of what has happened, and of how they can protect themselves should another such disaster occur. "The children have fresh memories of the disaster, so we can talk about what happened, and the children themselves can suggest what they could do to be prepared should a similar situation happen again", says Mari. "Teach-

ing children what they could do if they had to go through another disaster helps to reduce their fear, and leaves them better prepared for the future. Little things can make a big difference."

The effects of the cyclone are still very tangible in Burma. Save the Children has been doing what it can to help get life back to normal. "The children who have lost their families are the ones whose situation is worst", Mari explains. "And there are many who have lost relatives or friends. But at the same time children are strong, they have great reserves which enable them to deal with this kind of thing. Obviously, they can't shake these kinds of experiences off overnight – it's something they have to learn to live with. The absolutely most important thing for children is for everyday life to get back to normal."

In the first six months after the cyclone, Save the Children provided over half a million people, at least 225,000 of them children, with shelter, food, health-care and water. 146,025 people received assistance in the form of fish, oil, beans and salt. 100,000 children were given access to education, and we set up 158 child-friendly spaces which have benefited over 30,000 children. To date, over 1,000 children have been registered as separated from their families by the cyclone.



After the cyclone in Burma, a lot of children were housed for long periods of time in temporary camps, or Buddhist monasteries, Christian churches and other kinds of community institution. Photo Pat Brown, Panos Pictures.



Save the Children supports Twic Olympics, meant to offer young people returning home after the war a chance to integrate back into their communities. Foto Tom Pilston, Panos Pictures.

Secure and happy childhoods

March 2008 marked the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Studies show that at least 80,000 people have lost their lives as a result of the conflict, and over five million people have been displaced and are now refugees either within Iraq or in other countries.

Half of these refugees are children, and many of them have sought sanctuary in Sweden. Their situation is very uncertain, and large numbers of Iraqi children are living under great stress. A lot of Iraqi refugee children sought help at Save the Children's Crisis Centre during 2008.

In Jordan, which has taken some 600,000 refugees, and in Lebanon, which has taken about 60,000, we provide education for Iraqi refugee children. Families have been broken up, and a lot of these children have lost members of their immediate family. Only a small number of all refugee children go to school.

Talking about sex saves lives

Every year, 400,000 children under the age of eighteen contract HIV. That so many people become infected is, among other things, due to their not knowing enough about how to protect themselves against the disease, according to the findings of a study carried out by Save the Children together with the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU) in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

"Talking about sexuality and HIV is often very sensitive", says Eva Nordfjell, who works at Save the Children on HIV issues. In the study, the young people interviewed talked about their thoughts on HIV/AIDS, sexuality, love

and relationships. Some of them said that they had been forced to agree to sex in exchange for food, while others said that they had had unprotected sex because they did not have any condoms. "By listening to young people talking about their experiences, we can shape our work on sexual and reproductive health so that it better meets the needs of children and young people in the various countries concerned. In the long run, that's the only way of bringing down the figures for the spread of infection," says Eva.

Save the Children started work in Southern Africa in 1995. HIV and AIDS are widespread in the region, and Save the Children supports initiatives which improve children's knowledge in the area of sexual and reproductive health, and make it easier for children and young people to talk more openly about sexuality and gender equality.

Psychosocial support for children in Gaza

Save the Children has been present in Gaza since 1949, and is today one of the largest humanitarian organisations in the region. In addition to distributing relief parcels, the work is focused on providing the children of the region with a safe school environment and psychosocial support.

Since the attack on Gaza in December 2008, Save the Children have supported nearly 60,000 children. At the same time, we are appealing for more support, so that we can distribute more relief parcels and provide more psychosocial assistance. At present there are shortages of all basic necessities throughout the whole of Gaza, and no supplies are allowed across the borders. The situation is already very serious, and figu-

res from the UN show that the last reserves of food will soon be gone. The inhabitants of Gaza get fresh drinking water every five days, and the risk of disease is increasing all the time. A lot of children suffer from severe stress, and have had traumatic experiences of violence.

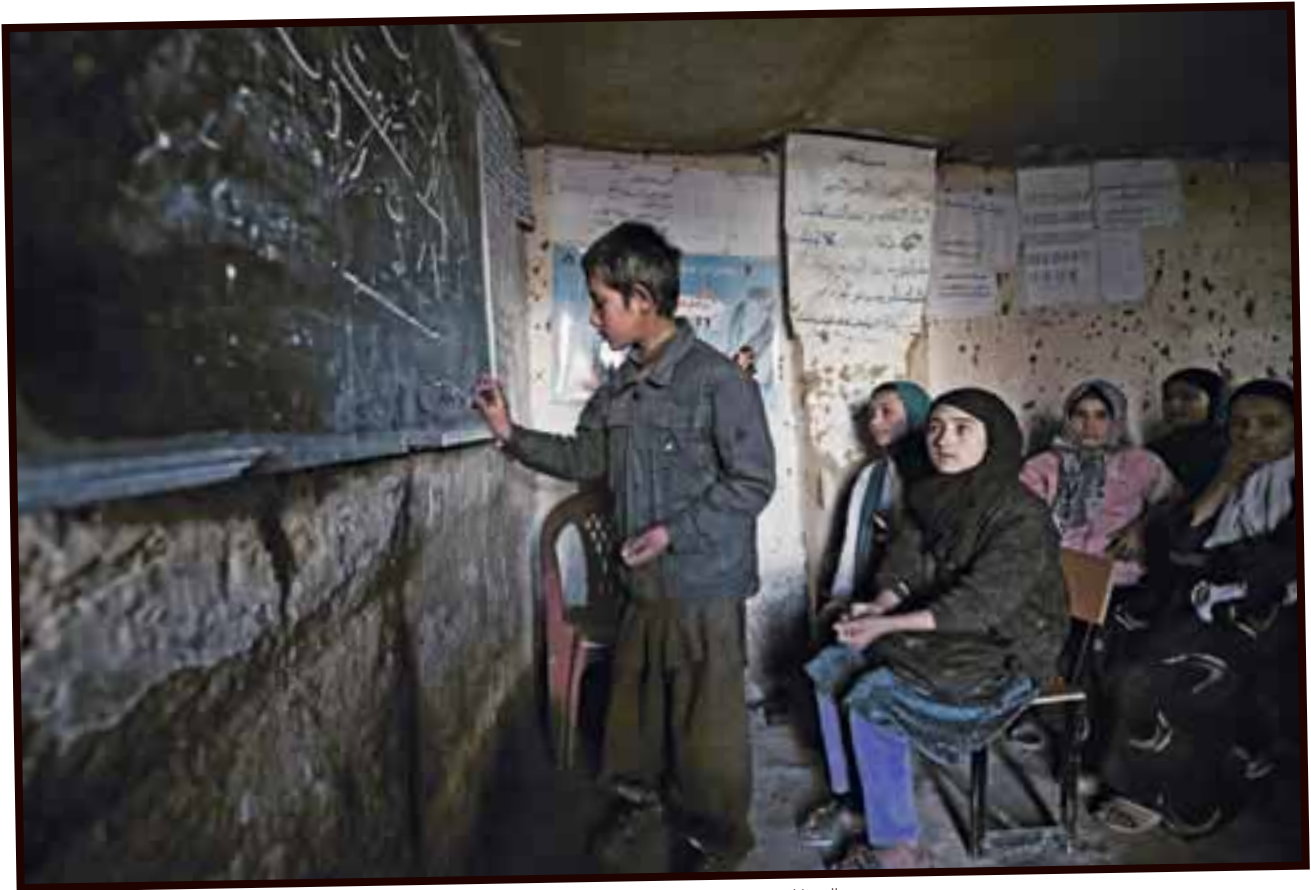
In Europe without papers

On an inaccessible piece of marshland near Saint Petersburg airport, a hundred or so people from Tajikistan are living in huts made of wood, paper and plastic. They are members of the Muslim Lyulya people. The Lyulya do not have Russian passports, and are classed as "illegal" immigrants. For them, there is no justice.

According to the Migration Policy Institute, there are approximately 4.5 million undocumented immigrants in the EU today. In Russia, the government claims that the corresponding figure is ten million; most of these come from countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus which were forced to be republics of the Soviet Union.

"The most defenceless people are those without papers. And of all undocumented people, the ones with the lowest standing are the Roma and other groups which are already severely marginalised, such as the Lyulya", says Stefania Kulaeva, who works for Memorial, a human rights organisation supported by Save the Children.

Memorial has discussed the possibility of providing education for undocumented children in the evenings, but to date it has proved difficult to raise the resources required. Undocumented immigrants are a sensitive issue all over the world, says Stefania. "The way undocumented children are treated is a clear test of how seriously governments take the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child."



Seventy-two million of the world's children do not go to school, despite being of school age. Photo Mats Lignell.

More examples

Rewrite the Future

Seventy-two million of the world's children do not go to school, despite being of school age. Of these, 37 million live in areas that are, or have been, afflicted by war. Save the Children is working to get more children into school; since 2006 we have been running a campaign called Rewrite the Future, the objective of which is to provide three million children who don't go to school with the opportunity to start school by 2010. In addition, we aim to give five million children living in conflict-affected countries a better school to go to.

Within the framework of the campaign, Save the Children builds and renovates schools, trains teachers and distributes educational materials. We also work together with governments to bring about improvements in the education children receive.

Education provides children with protection, and with better prospects for the future. No country has ever achieved sustained economic growth without having built up a system which ensures that just about all children receive at least basic primary and early-secondary school education. The chance to go to school is high on the wish-list for children and their parents in countries that are recovering from conflicts.

Training for military and inclusive education in West Africa

Many of the countries of Western Africa have recent experience of fierce armed conflicts, and it will take time for the wounds of war to heal. At Save the Children we believe that peace-keeping forces and soldiers can play a part in protecting and promoting children's rights, in both times of war and times of peace, which is why we have provided training for a large number of soldiers and policemen over the years in West Africa.

Save the Children's local partner organisations in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast and Mali have held courses for teachers in the aim of changing their attitudes, so that schools accept all children, irrespective of their gender and whether or not they have a disability. This is important, as it is still often the case that girls, and children with disabilities, are excluded from primary school.

In Ivory Coast, a country that has been badly affected by armed conflicts in recent years and that is still unstable, we have handed over the keys to 44 newly-restored schools, and distributed 45,000 "education packs" to the local authorities.

Bullying common in the Baltic countries

Physical and humiliating punishment of children is common in many of the countries bordering the eastern Baltic, as is underlined in a study presented by Save the Children in 2008. "Using force is still

a socially acceptable method of bringing children up in these countries", says Monika Sarajärvi, of Save the Children. In addition, the study shows that bullying among children is also widespread. "Adults ignore bullying; they see it as part of play, something the children can sort out for themselves", says Monika, who believes this could in part be connected with the fact that violence against children is not something that is deemed worthy of particular attention in these countries. The report from the study marks the start of a wide-ranging project against bullying which Save the Children will be carrying out in the Baltic countries in the coming years, in collaboration with various local partner organisations.

Roma children's right to go to school

In many European countries, the Roma are viewed as second-class citizens. Indeed, not even in countries where comprehensive-school education is compulsory can Roma always be guaranteed their right to go to school. In Albania, for instance, 54 per cent of Roma children who are of school age have never been to school. And in Russia they are often excluded on the grounds that they do not speak good enough Russian.

In 2008, Save the Children's partner organisations in Albania, Kosovo and Russia intensified their work to ensure respect for Roma children's right to go to school on the same terms as other children.

Education builds a brighter future

Under the Taliban regime, girls were banned from education; Over the past five years, more than six million children have started primary education in Afghanistan, and a third of them are girls.

"I like school. When I grow up I want to be a teacher, so that I can pass on what I know to other girls, and help build up my country again. School is important for the future of Afghanistan", says Najiba. She is ten years old, and is a member of the nomadic Kuchi people. She lives with her family outside Jalalabad, in eastern Afghanistan.

Save the Children opened a school here in 2008, with two classes: one for girls, and one for boys. There is no furniture in either of the classrooms – one big blackboard in each is all there is. The pupils sit squeezed together on a rug on the floor. However, there are no complaints about the spartan conditions. Najiba tells us enthusiastically about going to school: "We've already learnt

to read and write. I hope that one day, all children in Afghanistan will be able to go to school like me, then Afghanistan will be a better place to live."

When the Taliban were driven from power in 2001, hardly any Afghan girls attended school and barely a million boys were in education. Over the past five years, more than six million children have started primary education in Afghanistan, and a third of them are girls.

"There's a big difference between those who have an education and those who don't. A person with an education knows more, and can think about things in a different way. Education is like a light that helps you see clearly. In the past my tribe had nothing but the animals we moved around with, but now we are sending our sons and daughters to school", says Haji Isakhan, a religious leader from Najiba's village. Just like the other men who make up the village's council of elders, the Shura, he thinks it is important that girls receive an education: "There is nothing in the Koran that says girls should not go to school. Quite the opposite – I mean, before, if one of

our women fell ill, she had to see a male doctor. And that is not in agreement with the Koran; women should have female doctors. We want our daughters to have the education their mothers never had."

Working together with the local religious leaders, Save the Children has started up a total of 300 school-classes in small villages in Afghanistan. The local community builds the actual classrooms, together with a protective wall around the school, and Save the Children pays the teachers' salaries and buys in text-books, writing materials and paper. In addition, the teachers are given training in more child-friendly methods of teaching and maintaining discipline, without physical punishment.

"If we are to succeed in making sure that all children living in rural areas, and especially girls, are to get a school education, we have to respect the traditions and go about things in such a way that the religious leaders and village elders are prepared to work together with us", says Mohammad Hussain Hazim, education advisor at Save the Children's office in Kabul.

The official statistics show that less than a third of all girls in Year 4 are still at school in Year 6. And less than one per cent of all pupils in upper secondary education are girls. These figures are not repeated at Save the Children schools, however, where few pupils break off their education: "If a child doesn't turn up at school, a delegation of selected teachers and pupils goes to the family's home to find out what's wrong. They explain to the parents that children must go to school because they are Afghanistan's future", says Mohammad Hussain Hazim.

Save the Children's involvement in Afghanistan is a joint initiative of the Swedish and Norwegian organisations, together with some ten local organisations. During 2008 our education programme reached out to about 60,000 children, of whom 25,000 were girls.

Save the Children also focuses on teacher training and pupil participation, works to make it possible for handicapped children to attend school, and provides support for rebuilding schools.



Over the past five years, more than six million children have started primary education in Afghanistan, and a third of them are girls. Photo Mats Lignell.



Our work in Sweden

Established in 1919, Save the Children Sweden is a politically unaffiliated and religiously non-denominational voluntary organisation. We have over 88,000 members in 234 local branches spread throughout the country; the organisation has eleven regional offices, its head office in Stockholm and a youth association. Our work is supported by a total of over 277,000 members and donors.

The following presents examples of the important projects carried out in Sweden in 2008.

Children who witness violence

Children who witness violence are not, in Swedish law, defined as plaintiffs; this means there is a risk that they are not listened to in police investigations, and also that they will not benefit from any criminal damage compensation awarded by the courts.

In 2008 Save the Children Sweden published a report on children who witness violence, and called for a change in the law so that these children are seen as plaintiffs. A further example of our advocacy is provided by our response when consulted by the government inquiry "Children in Focus": it is our standpoint that it should be illegal to contact children over the Internet for sexual purposes.

Support for children and young people in crisis

Every year, hundreds of children receive support from the psychotherapists at Save the Children Sweden's Crisis Centre for Children and Young People. The psychotherapists and psychologists at the centre conduct therapeutic conversations with children and young people who have suffered violence or sexual abuse, traumatic experiences from war and displacement, or bereavement. We also take children's questions and offer them support with regard to parents who divorce, and clashes of cultural values.

Meeting and talking to children at the Crisis Centre teaches us a lot about what children's lives can look like in Sweden today, and where changes need to be made. This is knowledge that we use when carrying out advocacy and seeking to make society assume its responsibility for guaranteeing respect for the rights of all children.

We also provide advice on a consultative basis to social services, child psychiatry services, school health care, the national health service and universities.

Widening income gaps, child poverty report shows

Children who live in poverty are discriminated against, at school and in other contexts. Half of all children living with a single parent from a foreign background live in poverty, according to the 2008 issue of Save the Children Sweden's annual Child Poverty Report. The report also shows that the inequalities in standard of living between different social groups, and between different parts of Sweden, have widened.

"Every time there is a charge for something, however small it might seem, it may have major consequences for children", says Kalle Elofsson of Save the Children. "Being able to take part in all activities at school, whatever the economic situation of your parents, is a basic, obvious right – but for many children in Sweden today, that right is not reality."

Local work

Our local branches are hives of activity. Our members' portal, an intranet for members and local branches, shows the wide range of activities being organised around the country.

In 2008 the local branches together with the Youth Association worked with the young people's discussion groups called Ellen (for girls) or Allan (for boys), and the "Coolt med koll" support groups. Other activities carried out by local members include homework help, surveys of children's life circumstances, and advice for parents.

There is a growing interest in questions relating to children's right to democratic participation. One example of this is a project carried

out by the local branch in Hammerdal, in the province of Jämtland in northern Sweden, which has developed a model for consultation with the local pupils' council.

See me as a person

Save the Children Sweden works to make things better for children who are placed with foster families or care homes of various kinds. We are in permanent dialogue with the child psychiatry and social services, and we also talk directly to young people to canvass their views. We ran a project called "Children in Social Care", in which 120 children who live with foster families responded to interviews and questionnaires. The project resulted in a report called "See Me as a Person", which put forward concrete proposals for changes.

Alternative Report to the UN

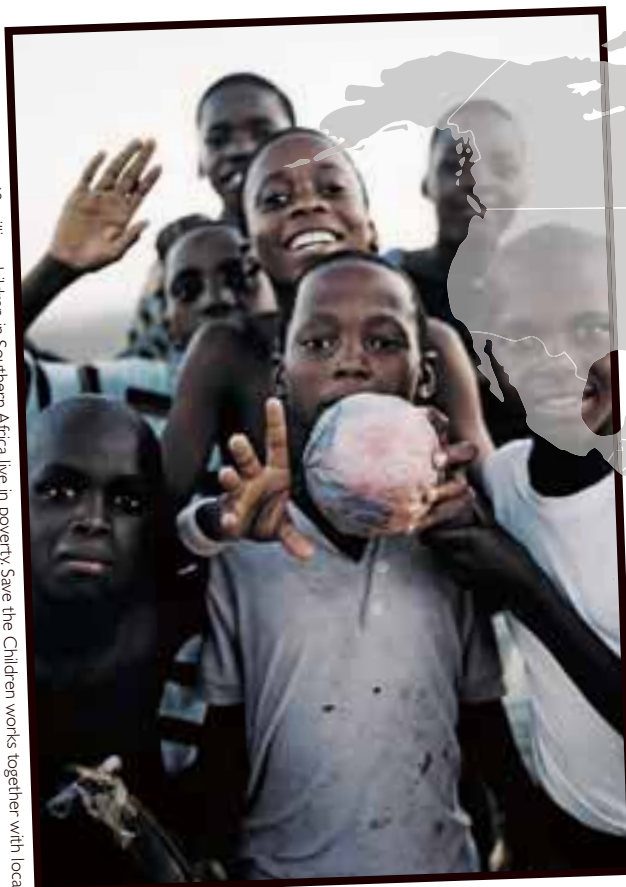
Every country in the world that has bound itself to follow the CRC is obliged every fifth year to submit a written report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva, describing the work the country has done to make the CRC a reality. Save the Children always produces an "alternative report" which is presented at the same time as the Swedish government's official report – the aim of our document is to give the Committee a more complete picture of the current child rights situation in Sweden.

In our 2008 Alternative Report we noted, among other things, that the Swedish government in its report had given inadequate answers, or no answers at all, to the following subjects:

- the right to have an application for family reunification dealt with humanely, positively and as quickly as possible;
- the situation for apathetic refugee children;
- the remit of the Children's Ombudsman;
- discrimination on the grounds of place of residence;
- children and violence.

The work of preparing the Alternative Report drew on contributions from fourteen district associations, eighteen local branches and the Youth Association.

The majority of the 60 million children in Southern Africa live in poverty. Save the Children works together with local organisations to try to change this unjust state of affairs. Photo: Chris de Bode/Paros Pictures.



Working together

Save the Children Sweden is a member of the International Save the Children Alliance, the world's leading organisation for children's rights. The Alliance is an umbrella organisation for twenty-eight member organisations which between them are active in over 120 countries. The work done under the aegis of the Alliance comprises thousands of projects, ranging from public opinion campaigns to emergency relief, and generates a combined annual turnover of some SEK 6,000 m (EUR 635 m).

Ever since Save the Children Sweden's annual general meeting took the formal decision to join the Alliance, in 1999, there has been an ever-increasing degree of collaboration and co-ordination with the other member organisations. The joint efforts are co-ordinated from a secretariat in London, and are governed by rules and agreements jointly decided on by the members. The common foundation for the collaboration, and indeed for all the work done by the Alliance, is the CRC.

A members' meeting is held once a year, at which the chairman and secretary general of each member organisation meet to discuss joint

strategic issues and decide on the guidelines which are to steer the work.

Four Key Challenges

At first, the Alliance's strategy for the period 2005–2010 contained three "key challenges", or areas for joint initiatives: Rewrite the Future – the drive to guarantee education for children in areas affected by conflict; the provision of support to the Alliance's member organisations; and increased collaboration and co-ordination in those countries where several member organisations have operations. At the annual meeting in 2007 it was decided to add a fourth joint key challenge: co-ordination and collaboration in armed conflict and emergencies.

Education in war and conflict zones

The aim of the Rewrite the Future campaign is to give eight million children access to good school education by 2010. The campaign embraces some thirty countries; to date 600,000 children have been given the opportunity to start school, and three million children have benefited from improved education.

Stronger member organisations

A "strong member" is a member organisation that fulfils certain criteria with regard to financing and programme operations. Save the Children Sweden

is one of six strong members – the others being the Save the Children associations of Norway, US, Australia, Italy and UK.

The more strong members we have, the better we are able to influence the UN, politicians and other decision-makers; we are able to raise more money, and the larger member organisations are able to provide more support to the smaller members.

Co-ordination

By giving one member organisation the management responsibility for the operations carried out in a country where several Save the Children organisations have operations, we can speak with a single, united voice when dealing with local governments, authorities and organisations. We also make efficiency gains by sharing premises and other resources.

Collaboration in war and emergencies

A clear lesson learned during the major natural disasters of recent years is that the organisations within the Alliance can do more if they work together than they can working separately from each other. The Alliance has now drawn up guidelines for the co-ordination of emergency relief, with unified methods and tools for communication and fundraising.

There are major challenges to be met concerning children's rights, not least with regard to the situation for Roma children in Europe. Photo Robin Hammond, Panos Pictures.



Working for children's rights

Save the Children Sweden is a religiously and politically independent non-governmental organisation; as well as our operations in Sweden we are active in eight regions around the world.

We work together with our members in Sweden, and our partner organisations in other countries, in the aim of bringing about better conditions for children and ensuring that children's rights are respected.

All our work is founded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Save the Children Sweden was established on 19 November 1919. A few months before that, the first Save the Children organisation had been founded in England: the Save the Children Fund, which was set up by Eglantyne Jebb. She was one of the first people in the world to use the term "children's rights".

Save the Children Sweden played a very active role in the framing of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which was adopted by

the UN General Assembly in 1989. Since then, with the CRC as our inspiration and guide, we have worked to bring about long-term improvements in the life conditions of the world's children, and striven to protect and promote their rights.

In Sweden, and all over the world

In Sweden, we work together with the members of our local branches to carry out advocacy work and influence public opinion on matters relating to children's welfare. Our eleven regional offices around the country provide support to the local branches.

Our international work is carried out in eight regions around the world, in collaborative partnership with some 330 local and national organisations. These organisations are the experts when it comes to the situation of children in each particular country, and it is by helping to strengthen the national actors and initiatives that we can bring about lasting improvements in children's lives.

We work to strengthen our partner organisations so that they are able to fulfil a monitoring and campaigning role vis-à-vis governments and public authorities. We also support networks of child rights organisations at national, regional and global level.

Save the Children Sweden is a member of

the International Save the Children Alliance – an umbrella organisation for twenty-eight organisations which work to promote children's rights. Together with the other member organisations we lift children's rights into the spotlight in all aid work, both in emergency situations and in more long-term initiatives.

Our Objectives and Methods

We strive to bring about lasting improvements for children in vulnerable situations. Children should be able to make their voices heard and to influence their own life situation. It is their right to be protected from violence and discrimination, to be given a safe and healthy childhood, and to receive an education which fosters knowledge and self-confidence.

Our work is all about trying to ensure that all children can enjoy these rights. In this aim we collect facts, listen to children and analyse their situation. We provide direct support to children. We pass on our knowledge and experience to those who are in a position to affect children's conditions of life. And as well as that, we work to mobilise public opinion and to influence decision-makers, from local councils to the United Nations, to ensure that children's rights are given practical expression.

A year of change

2008 was a year of change for Save the Children, both in Sweden and internationally speaking. We have strengthened our work in Sweden by decentralising some of the work previously carried out at our Head Office to four "sub-national regions".

Within the International Save the Children Alliance there has been an intensification of collaboration and co-operation in order to make sure we maximise our capacity to help children around the world; and in 2008 we at Save the Children Sweden laid the foundation for assuming leadership in the work done by the international Save the Children movement to guarantee children's right to safety and protection.

We have also improved still further the efficiency of our responses to natural disasters; we are proud to be able to say that Save the Children Sweden was the first relief organisation to reach the areas affected by the flooding in Burma, and that, thanks to the efforts of our fantastic staff on the ground, we were able to start relief work immediately during the bombing in Gaza.

Monitoring decisions that affect children's lives

Sweden is the country in the EU where the largest proportion of decisions that affect children's lives are taken at municipal and regional (rather than

national) level. At Save the Children Sweden we have a long tradition of successful action to influence decisions at national level and now, with our new organisation, we aim to be as good at affecting decisions taken locally and regionally.

In 2008 we showed that there are considerable differences in the level of support children and young people receive, depending on where in the country they live. This applies with regard to children who have suffered violence, children from families with drug-abuse problems, children who have been bereaved of family members, or children with disabilities (who for example may not have any choice of school). We continue to campaign for child welfare shelters to be set up all over Sweden, we organise support groups for young people, we arrange homework help, and defend the rights of asylum-seeking children and children without papers.

At the international level, too, there have been major changes. Bit by bit we are phasing out our own country offices, and switching instead to joint offices which we run together with sister organisations from the Alliance

This solution makes it possible for us to make better use of our combined resources. Three cornerstones of our international operations are our work to strengthen civil society; children's right to participation; and efforts to make our advocacy even more effective.

The Alliance's joint initiative to ensure that woeducation is provided to children in areas affected by war – Rewrite the Future – has produced good results to date, with no fewer than seven million children either being given the opportunity to go to school at all, or having improvements made to their school. Within the Alliance we have also made a lot of difference in other ways for children in areas hit by disaster or war, such as Burma, Sudan, Afghanistan and Gaza. And there are challenges to be met closer to home, not least with regard to the situation for Roma children in Europe.

Save the Children always works to help those children who are most at risk, be it at home in Sweden or elsewhere in the world

We work to make things happen from municipal level, all the way up to the UN. We are proud of all we have done to improve the reality of the lives of large numbers of children, both at home in Sweden and around the world. But we could never have done it without the support of all our members and the generosity of our donors. It is your support that enables us to continue our work of helping the most vulnerable children. Every krona, every penny, makes a difference!

As an organisation we are committed to living up to the confidence you place in us – so we attach a great deal of importance to presenting the results of our work, and showing how cost-effective we are. This Annual Report presents a selection of the things we did in 2008; we hope you will find it interesting and inspiring reading.

Our warmest thanks for all your support in 2008!



Elisabeth Dahlin, Secretary General since September 2008. Photo Theresia Viska.

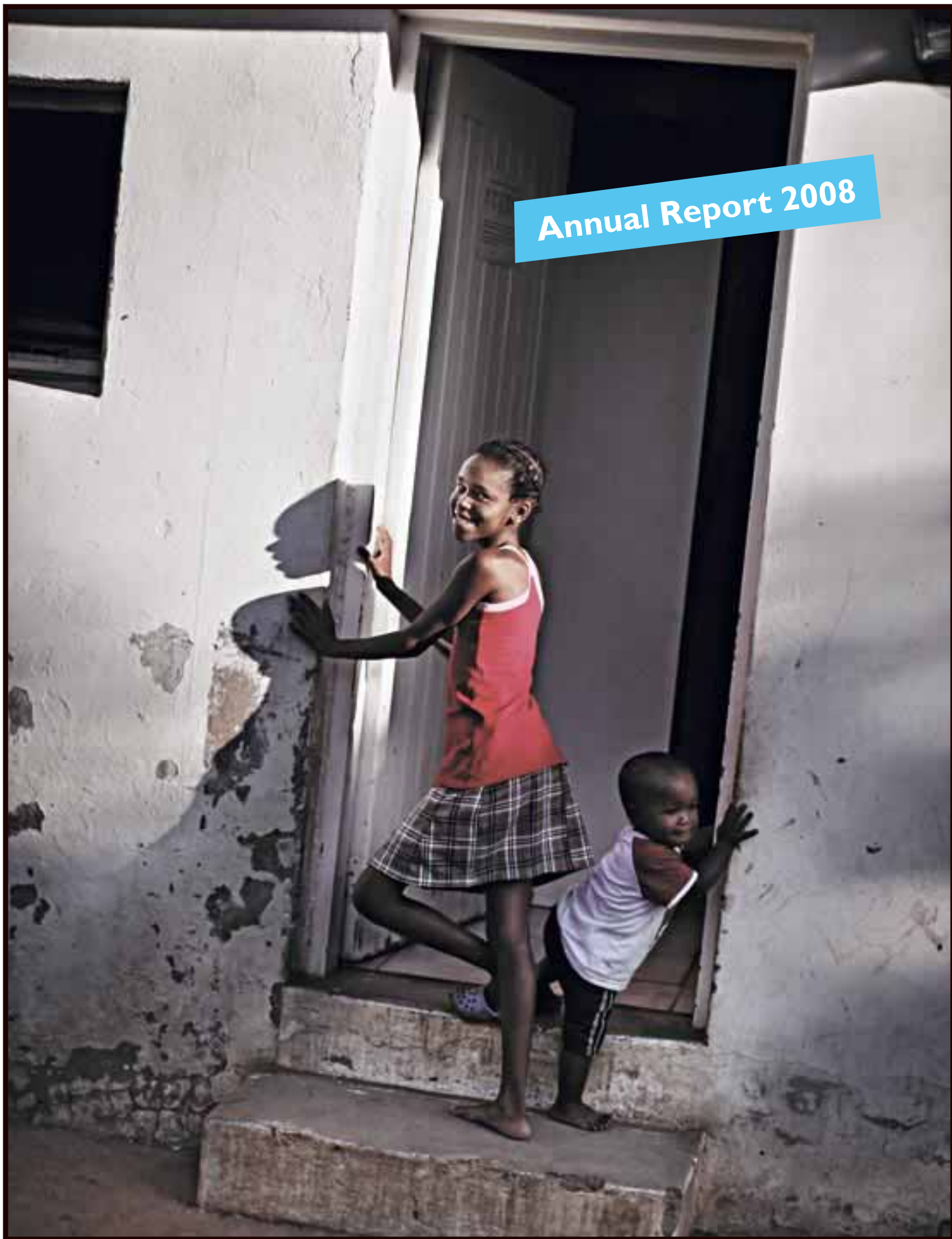


Inger Ashing, Chairwoman of the Board since the Annual Meeting 2008. Photo Theresia Viska.

Elisabeth Dahlin
Secretary General

Inger Ashing
Chairwoman of the Board

Annual Report 2008



Save the Children
Sweden