



**Save the Children**

United Nations Human Rights Council  
21st Session  
10-28 September 2012

**Item 6, Consideration of UPR reports  
CONSIDERATION OF THE UPR REPORT OF INDIA**

Madame President,

Thank you for giving us the floor.

Save the Children is making this statement jointly with World Vision.

We welcome the report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of India, in particular the recommendations relating to children's rights.

We also welcome the Indian government's efforts to protect children's rights and the Indian delegation's description of India's approach to human rights as a *rights-based approach*. Further, we particularly welcome the advancements that have been made in the reduction of poverty, infant mortality, education and malnutrition.

However, we also recognize that there are other decisions which the government must take to secure the well-being of its children.

***1. Maternal and Child Health***

Eighteen UPR recommendations, including recommendations 138.76 and 138.146, call on the Indian government to continue to work for the welfare of children and women and to achieve better results in the area of health and access to health. Specific recommendations call for the reduction of the high level of maternal and child mortality, to address discrimination in access to maternal health services, the need for effective measures to fully implement the National Rural Health Mission, and to address child marriage which has a devastating effect on the health of both child mothers and their babies.

We believe that India needs to redouble its efforts and operationalize these recommendations by appointing equitably distributed, adequately motivated, and better equipped health workers who have better capacities in order to achieve MDG 4 and 5. We also believe that the health worker gap in India needs to be filled, as per WHO norms, with an urgent priority. We call on the government to implement these measures especially in the hardest to reach geographical regions of the country.

***2. Health budget***

Recommendations 138.135, 138.149 and 138.159 call for an increase in the proportion of the budget that's spent on health.

We recognise that the first serious step towards addressing child and maternal mortality is increasing the public health expenditure. We believe that it should be increased to the WHO recommended figure of 5 per cent of the national GDP by 2017, which is the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. Further, we also recommend that two-thirds of this budget increase be spent on primary health care so as to have maximum impact on children.

Thank you