

Ethiopia has made significant strides in establishing and strengthening **Child-Friendly National Systems and Structures (CFNSS)**. To date, the government of Ethiopia has ratified constitutional provisions and more than seven international treaties on the “best interests of the child.” The establishment and strengthening of the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWYCA) has assisted monitoring and development of children’s wellbeing in the country. The national Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) further sets out clear objectives to promote the wellbeing of children. Still, notable gaps in child-friendly national systems and structures prevent the country from achieving minimum standards of protection, including a lack of mechanisms to evaluate the impacts of policies and national programmes on children.

Save the Children is building strong partnerships with civil society organisations (CSOs), the government, and research institutions to mainstream child wellbeing instruments across Ethiopia. **In 2012, our CFNSS programmes reached more than 558,000 people**, supporting national systems to actively monitor and promote children’s priorities. Working alongside the MoWYCA and relevant government bodies, we support flexible, inclusive systems that improve the lives of Ethiopia’s children, relying on the **cooperative efforts of donors, partners, and duty bearers**.



Anne-Sofie Helms/Save the Children

Besufekad, 8 months, with his mother Meseret at a Save the Children-supported urban garden programme in Bishoftu.

What are Child-Friendly National Systems and Structures?

A child-friendly national system is a governing authority that *creates and adequately resources the institutions, mechanisms, and other measures necessary to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in line with its General Measures of Implementation (GMI).*

COMPREHENSIVE DATA ON THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN

THE PROBLEM A preliminary analysis on the wellbeing of children in Ethiopia, conducted by Save the Children, identified several important gaps. These gaps include a lack of data collection systems and the absence of comprehensive information on the current situation for children. Though there are many actors working for children’s wellbeing, there are no standard indicators for measuring and evaluating impact of interventions. National coordination remains weak between civil society members, while monitoring procedures are insufficient.

OUR APPROACH Save the Children aims to assess structural gaps within national systems and policies to better inform the growth of inclusive frameworks for children. With the help of partners, we can **support and strengthen mainstreaming of children’s priorities**, while helping duty bearers and service providers uphold their mandates. Through conversations with policy-makers and key stakeholders, Save the Children can design, pilot, and scale-up **innovative approaches to building civil society’s capacity** to provide child-centred interventions. By establishing mechanisms for actors to hold duty bearers accountable, we can work towards **fulfilling our obligations to children**, as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



Children in Dessie, Ethiopia take part in the 2012 World Marathon Challenge

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

Investment in Children (iC) is one of Save the Children’s global breakthroughs. Our experience shows that all children, especially the poorest, benefit from greater public investment and better use of society’s resources in realizing their rights.

- ✓ **We’re working to support appropriate budgeting and expenditure for children by governments, donors, and the private sector.**
- ✓ **We’re promoting efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of public spending on children by enhancing transparency, accountability, and the participation of stakeholders, including children.**

ESTABLISH AND STRENGTHEN NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

THE PROBLEM Despite its active engagements towards enhancing the quality of life for children, Ethiopia faces considerable obstacles in fully addressing children's priorities, including inadequate resources and funding for its existing organisational systems and structures. CSOs also lack the technical, financial, and human capital to approach issues of children's wellbeing. A greater variety of thriving and efficient child-centred mechanisms are needed to ensure robust coordination between government and civil society actors.

OUR APPROACH Save the Children is committed to working with the MoWCYA and other relevant government sectors as vital strategic partners in **improving child-centred national systems, structures, and mechanisms**. In enabling civil society actors to better respond to the challenges currently faced by Ethiopia's children, we are undertaking **research on policies, generating evidence on best practices, and building the capacity of government bodies** in different sectors. Relying on Save the Children's **experience and resources**, we can support the establishment and strengthening of national systems and structures that adequately address the needs of marginalised children and children in hard-to-reach areas.



School children celebrate Save the Children's partnership with GSK's Orange United programme

DID YOU KNOW...

Involving children in our work is key to our success. That's why **every one of our programmes emphasises child participation** in the design, monitoring, and evaluation of projects and results.

A STRENGTHENED CIVIL SOCIETY AND CHILDREN'S INITIATIVES

THE PROBLEM Civil society organizations (CSOs), including children's groups, lack the technical resources, financial backing, and human capital to raise concerns on issues related to the wellbeing of children. Consequently, there is limited transfer of skills and knowledge toward the enhancement of child-friendly and child-led approaches across the country. In order to fulfil its commitment to the UNCRC, Ethiopia must actively encourage long-term child-focused programmes, policies, and transformative strategies.

OUR APPROACH We can decrease children's vulnerability to economic and price surges through **increased investment in social protection**. Save the Children is working to establish and strengthen coordination and communication on children's initiatives by mobilizing leaders and youth in developing community led action across Ethiopia. Using a **holistic approach** that includes girls, adolescents, and children with disabilities, we can encourage children's involvement and enrichment in their communities, while raising awareness through **increased technical support and capacity** within educational institutions and various key sectors.



Children in Yalo district, Afar region, Ethiopia, with red balloons

INCREASED NATIONAL BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR CHILDREN

THE PROBLEM The African Child Policy Forum reported that Ethiopia allocates a "fair" amount of resources towards children. The absence of an effective birth registration process leaves the exact number of children in Ethiopia unknown, leading to inaccurate budget allocation analyses. Budget allocations for children are often vague and not properly targeted to address needs. Children are also rarely involved in formulating objectives for increased budget allocations by key stakeholders, including the private sector.

OUR APPROACH Save the Children is partnering with the private sector to **support appropriate budgeting for children** by raising awareness and building capacity of local organisations to promote social accountability efforts, including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). We can encourage philanthropic activities from the private sector to support children's wellbeing, and with our civil society and government partners, we can **increase the national budget and monitoring practices for children**.

Save the Children is the world's leading independent organisation for children. Our vision is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development, and participation. Our mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

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