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UN agencies launch latest factbook for taking care of children



Children in Tajikistan after being vaccinated. [File Photo]

7 April 2010 – Six United Nations agencies and the World Bank launched today a revised book that provides life-saving information to families and communities on how to prevent child and maternal deaths, diseases, injuries and violence.

“Through simple messages, *Facts for Life* aims to bring vital knowledge to parents and caregivers, who are the first line of defence in protecting children from illness and harm,” said Ann Veneman, Executive Director of the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)), which co-published the book.

The UN World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)), UN Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)), UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), [UNAIDS](#) and the [World Bank](#) are also involved in publishing the book.

First published in 1989 and updated on a regular basis, the book provides practical advice on pregnancy, childbirth, major childhood illnesses, child development, early learning, parenting, protection, care and support for children.

“Pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, measles and AIDS, together account for half of all deaths of children under age five,” said Ms. Veneman.

“These diseases are largely preventable and sometimes it is a simple lack of knowledge that causes these deaths. *Facts for Life* helps bridge that information gap,” she added.

The fourth edition of *Facts for Life* has 14 chapters. It includes new information on newborn health as well as new chapter dedicated to child protection.

Circulated worldwide in 215 languages since its first edition, *Facts for Life* can be adapted culturally with cartoons and illustrations, and has turned up in a variety of media, including soap operas, radio shows and university and academic publications, according to UNICEF. The latest version is also available online and includes a discussion forum.

Reducing child mortality and improving maternal health are two of the eight Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)) that world leaders agreed to strive towards by 2015.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has asked to speed up progress towards the MDGs and will host a special thematic debate on the subject during the annual high-level General Assembly debate in September in New York.

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