ACTIVITY 6:
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HEALTH SYSTEMS FAIL?

AIM: Young people explore health systems around the world and consider how they might be strengthened and changed to better support children everywhere, realising their rights.

Preparation:
- Review UNICEF global healthcare stories
- Review optional activity resource links if you choose to complete these activities

Facilitator materials and resources:
- Activity 6 presentation
- UNICEF global healthcare stories
- World map
- Completed maps from activity 3 community health systems mapping

Participant materials:
- Note paper and pen
- Internet to research health issues in different places

Facilitator introduction

Health systems and access to these systems can look very different in countries around the world. While some countries like the UK have a healthcare system like the NHS, intended to give everyone in the UK access to the care they need, about half of the world's population goes without regular, affordable, reliable access to healthcare. In these places, children are being denied their right to the best possible health.

While the world can sometimes feel very big, and places like Malawi, Ukraine, and China can feel very far away from the UK, we've all learned during the COVID-19 pandemic that health systems around the world are very connected and dependent on one another. When health systems or their supporting infrastructure are disrupted in one place there can be knock on effects felt in many other places.

In this session, we'll expand on the activities we've done so far in exploring our own health system and the obstacles towards achieving universal health coverage. We'll build a broader understanding of how health systems around the world are interconnected and need to be strengthened.

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PART 1: WARM-UP – REFLECTION AND JOURNALLING

1. Using six sheets of blank A4 paper folded in half and stapled on the spine, invite each young person to create their own reflection journal. Allow a few minutes at the start of the exercise for them to design the cover and personalise their journal.

2. Share that this week's activities will investigate what healthcare looks like in other places around the world.

3. Using the activity 6 presentation, show the reflection questions, and give the young people a few minutes to reflect on their personal and global experience with the pandemic. Reassure the group that what they write in their reflection journal is private, and it doesn't have to be shared with anyone unless they choose to share it.

4. At the end of the warm-up time, consider repeating the breathing exercise from activity 4 if talking about COVID-19 brings up emotions for the group, or any young people in the group.

PART 2: HOW DO HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS LOOK DIFFERENT AROUND THE WORLD?

1. Ask young people to reflect on the local healthcare system mapping activity they completed from activity 3. Display the completed maps from the exercise as a refresher. Explain that in this activity they'll think beyond the UK to consider what healthcare and health systems look like in some other places in the world.

2. Ask young people to share what they might know about healthcare in other places around the world.

3. Using the activity 6 presentation share the UNICEF stories from Nepal, Somalia, Yemen, and Malawi.

4. For each of the locations and stories shared, reflect on the following questions in your journal:

- What is the country shared?
- What is a one to two sentence summary of the story?
- How is the health system here different from the health system in my community?
- What are the obstacles or challenges these children face that keep them from having their rights realised?

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PART 3: WRITING A RIGHTS-RESPECTING ENDING

1. In small groups (or in plenary as a continuation of the preceding activity) have young people choose one of the UNICEF country stories from the presentation.

2. Explain that in each of these stories, UNICEF is working here to help meet needs where there are gaps in the health system so that children's rights are realised, but it shouldn't have to be this way. Every child should be able to access a strong healthcare system that supports their right to their best possible health.

3. For the story selected, have young people consider the following two questions in their small group:

- How could the health system in this country be strengthened or changed so that all people could have access to health coverage and that children would experience their full right to the best possible health?
- Article 24 specifically says that it is the responsibility of richer countries to help poor countries achieve the best possible health for children. How do you think the UK helps (or should help) this country so children there (and everywhere) can realise this right?

4. Invite the young people to rewrite the story in their group to have a stronger health system and a rights-respecting ending.

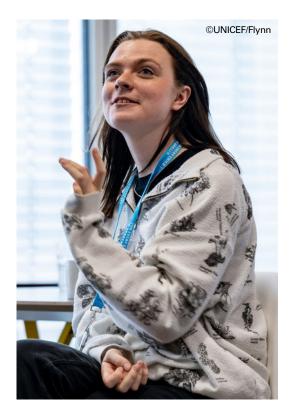**5.** When all groups have finished, have them share their revised, rights-respecting stories.

Optional activity 1: Produce a rights-respecting radio show

Beginning with the stories shared in part 2 as examples, invite young people to work in small groups to research the news or other sources like UNICEF UK website to find more stories where children's right to the best possible health is being taken care of through strong health systems, or examples where this right is at risk because of weaker health systems. Have each small group rewrite a summary of their story in a short radio or television-news style, then invite the young people to compile and record their work to create their own rights-respecting radio show. Share the **Essential Radio Script Guide for Beginners** or **Top 5 Tips for Writing Awesome Radio Scripts** for tips.

Optional activity 2:
The great debate on global health

Invite young people to participate in a formal debate. Split the young people into two groups, assigning each group a perspective/position on the best approach to global health to research and defend. Group 1 will research and defend the position of disease eradication as an effective approach to global health. Group 2 will research and defend the position of Universal Health Coverage as an effective approach to global health. Prompt young people to begin their research with the following resources: **UN global health issues**, **It's not Ebola...it's the systems**, and **Eradicating Polio**.

Through research and debate, young people gain understanding of the importance of health coverage for all and make a link to the idea that too strong an emphasis on disease eradication (similar to what happened during COVID-19) can mean that while we may (or may not) get rid of one disease, if we don't have strong health systems then other health problems will be a challenge. (See **tips for conducting a classroom debate**.)

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