

OutRight World Children's Day Event Q&A

If you couldn't attend the event on 18th November 2022, or your questions weren't answered live, then this document covers what our guests spoke about, and answers all the questions submitted by our audience. Some of the questions asked during the event were quite technical so we had to consult our UNICEF UK specialists. We hope this information helps you answer children's questions.

For context, **Arushi** is a member of UNICEF UK's Youth Advisory Board and **Svetlana** is a Programmes Information Specialist for Child Health at UNICEF UK. The event was hosted by **Grace Hunt**, Youth Campaigns Officer, with the Q&A moderated by **Jessica Bool**, Youth Engagement – Strategic Lead, both from UNICEF UK.

1. How do you manage your own wellbeing when you are working to help other people all the time?

- Svetlana talked about the importance of resting and doing things that make her happy as well - like playing with her kitten.
- Arushi spoke about how she plans certain points in her day to take time away from studying. She also loves to read and cook different food, like baking cakes whenever she takes time away from the screen. Arushi also likes to talk to her friends and family whenever something is making her feel worried.

2. What are you most proud of in your work for UNICEF UK?

- "There are a few activities I have participated in, like discussing which of the problems that children face should be discussed with the Children's Minister or reviewing UNICEF documents. However, I am most proud of sharing my voice in the Outright campaign as I have been able to share my passion for health." Arushi

3. What inspired you both to join UNICEF?

- "I was inspired to join UNICEF UK as I am interested in learning about UNICEF's work, sharing my opinion on important topics like Climate Change and Health and raising awareness about Children's Rights. I especially like the UNCRC as it explains clearly all of the things that every child in every country should have access to, to ensure they are safe, healthy, learning and developing skills that will be helpful to them in the future." Arushi

4. What is your favourite part about World Children's Day?

"I love when children take over our communication channels during WCD and raise their voices to talk about what affects them and shine a spotlight on the most pressing challenges faced by their generation. I also loved this year's WCD because I was able to join the OutRight campaign and speak to the Rights Respecting Schools via our online event!"
Svetlana

"My favourite part of World Children's Day is the increased awareness and conversation about Children's Rights. It is very encouraging to see and be a part of the celebration of children!" Arushi

5. How many countries does UNICEF work in?

UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories and in the world's toughest places to reach the children and young people in greatest need.

6. How do we know the work being done by us all and UNICEF is making a difference to children all around the world?

UNICEF's Global annual report highlights some of the organisation's achievements of 2021 [here](#). These include:

- In its role as procurement coordinator for the COVAX Facility, UNICEF led the procurement and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines. In 2021, COVAX delivered 958 million doses (including donated doses) to 144 countries.
- Providing services to prevent stunting and other forms of malnutrition, reaching nearly 336 million children, 38 per cent more than in 2020.
- Helping 48.6 million out-of-school children access education, including 6.4 million children on the move and 31.7 million in humanitarian settings.
- Leading positive policy change and action in 92 per cent of intended countries through global advocacy on vaccines, education, mental health, water, climate, and nutrition and child protection in humanitarian situations.
- Providing prevention and care interventions through joint programming with UNFPA to 7.6 million adolescent girls at risk of child marriage, up from 2.1 million in 2017

- Expanding access to safe water and basic sanitation for 69.9 million people and basic sanitation for 59.6 million people from 2018-2021, reaching ambitious targets.

7. How many children do you help each year?

In the UK in 2021, UNICEF UK's work meant that:

- More than 600,000 newborn babies were supported by UNICEF's Baby Friendly Initiative.
- Over 1.5 million children go to schools that are putting rights at the heart of their culture through Rights Respecting Schools.
- More than 500,000 children in the UK were living in a community working with UNICEF UK to put children's rights at the heart of local decisions, services, and spaces with Child Friendly Cities.

Globally, you can read about the number of children reached in 2021 [here](#).

8. How does UNICEF manage to do so many things?

UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories to save children's lives, to defend their rights, and to help them fulfil their potential, from early childhood through adolescence. You can read about where UNICEF works [here](#).

UNICEF does this through working with partners, like other United Nations organisations, and with Governments across the world to reach millions of children each year.

9. Who founded UNICEF?

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), originally known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 11 December 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children and mothers in countries that had been devastated by World War II. In 1950, UNICEF's mandate was extended to address the long-term needs of children and women in developing countries everywhere. You can read more about our history [here](#).

10. How do you ensure that the UK Government plays its part in supporting children's rights? Do they help with funding?

In 2021, the UK Government remained a key UNICEF partner, providing vital support to our

humanitarian response to severe emergencies in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia and Yemen. The UK has also, in 2022, pledged critical support to UNICEF's response to the war in Ukraine.

UNICEF UK and the UK Government's work together on policy and advocacy at the global level on famine prevention, girls' education, access to and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, and climate change have been critical to secure and move forward global commitments in these areas. Through the UK's Presidency of the UN Security Council, the G7 Summit in Cornwall, COP26 in Glasgow and the UK-hosted Global Education and Global Vaccinations Summits, UNICEF worked closely with the UK Government in 2021 to address the needs of children and secure tangible commitments.

You can read more about the UK Government's role [here](#).

Regarding funding, the UK Government was the seventh largest overall contributor to UNICEF in 2021, providing \$257 million USD in critical support for programming worldwide.

The UK ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in December 1991. As international law, all public bodies, like local councils, and those who make decisions and policies that affect children should consider the UNCRC when doing so.

Every five years, the UNCRC reporting takes place. This is when the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child looks at the whole UK on how well it's meeting its promises under the UNCRC.

UNICEF UK ensures implementation of the CRC in the UK by holding the government to account, but also supporting them with advice on how to do better on children's rights.

11. Are you able to work in countries where there are dictatorships?

UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories and in the world's toughest places to reach the children and young people in greatest need. Before, during and after humanitarian emergencies, UNICEF is on the ground, bringing lifesaving help and hope to children and families. Non-political and impartial, we are never neutral when it comes to defending children's rights and safeguarding their lives and futures.

12. Do you currently operate in Palestine?

In the Gaza Strip and West Bank, including East Jerusalem, around 2.1 million people need humanitarian assistance, among them 934,000 children. The situation in the State of Palestine remains a protracted protection crisis, exacerbated by the May 2021 escalation, closure of the Gaza Strip, the COVID-19 pandemic, a deepening financial and fiscal crisis within the Palestinian economy, and a surge in commodities prices due to the economic impact of Ukraine conflict.

In 2022, the continuous conflict-related violence, including grave violations, has seriously impacted Palestinian children's rights and well-being.

UNICEF continues to address humanitarian and recovery needs resulting from the May 2021 escalation, support COVID-19 response, expand services for vulnerable groups and enhance the capacities of shock-responsive social protection mechanisms, linking humanitarian to development efforts.

In 2022, UNICEF is requesting US\$39 million to ensure 732,000 people have access to safe water, 108,000 children and women have access to primary healthcare, 38,800 children and caregivers access mental health and psychosocial services, and 60,000 children receive learning materials.

13. Is UNICEF is working in Ukraine?

Yes, UNICEF have been working to keep children safe since this conflict began eight years ago and are determined to remain in Ukraine to reach the most vulnerable children and families.

We are working closely with our UN partners in Poland, Moldova, Belarus, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic, to help provide humanitarian support for children and families fleeing the war.

- Over 4.5 million children and women in Ukraine have been able to access primary health care.
- Over 3.5 million people have been provided with access to safe drinking water and over 965,000 people have received critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies.
- UNICEF-supported mental health and psychosocial support interventions have reached over 2.2 million children and caregivers.

- Over 850,000 children have been engaged in education.
- Working with local governments and the UNHCR, we have created 25 Blue Dot safe spaces for children and women. Blue dot shelters provide a safe space for families seeking refuge as well as providing water and sanitation supplies.

You can read more about this work [here](#).

14. In which countries is child labour still happening? How is UNICEF going to tackle this?

Economic hardship exacts a toll on millions of families worldwide – and in some places, it comes at the price of a child's safety. Roughly 160 million children were subjected to child labour at the beginning of 2020, with 9 million additional children at risk due to the impact of COVID-19.

In its worst forms, child labour can result in slavery, exploitation including trafficking - To address child trafficking, UNICEF works with United Nations partners and the European Union on initiatives that reach 13 countries: Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, South Africa, Ukraine.

Read more about this work [here](#).

15. How does UNICEF know if there are problems in a country?

UNICEF works in nearly every country in the world. UNICEF is on the ground before, during and after humanitarian emergencies. Our global supply chain and local presence mean we can get help to where it's needed fast – we can ship lifesaving supplies almost anywhere in the world within 72 hours.

Just as important, UNICEF stays and delivers. How we respond in crises lays the foundation for long-term development, just as how we work in non-crisis situations helps communities to weather future shocks.

16. Which countries are your main focus at the moment?

The problems affecting children in different countries are so different, it's impossible to choose which are the most important, which is why we have a UNICEF office in nearly every country in the world.

However, when there's an emergency, some countries receive more funding for humanitarian response than others, so UNICEF work hard to try to speak out about these emergencies to raise funds. Situations like the climate fuelled nutrition crises in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, for example.

17. How old do you have to be to work with UNICEF? How do you join UNICEF?

UNICEF UK is the same as any employer in the UK - you have to have finished your education before you can work here. However, to apply to join the Youth Advisory Board you have to be 14-18 years old and live and study in the UK. You can find out more [here](#).

18. How long have each of you been members of UNICEF?

Arushi joined the Youth Advisory Board in November 2019 and Svetlana has worked for UNICEF UK since 2016 (she also worked at UNICEF HQ and Ukraine Country Office in 2009-2010).

19. Do people's rights change from country to country? Do children in every country have the same rights?

The UNCRC is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely-ratified international human rights treaty in history. Every country in the world apart from the USA has signed up to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights.

20. Why does the UNCRC exist? What article do you think is the most beneficial for students to know?

The Convention must be seen as a whole: all the rights are linked and no right is more important than another. The right to relax and play (Article 31) and the right to freedom of expression (Article 13) have equal importance as the right to be safe from violence (Article 19) and the right to education (Article 28). It's okay if you are more interested in one than another, though!

21. Would Svetlana like to work outside the UK? Are you happy doing the job that you do?

I have worked outside the UK (2000-2010) and travelled to over 43 countries, often for work. In 2009-2010 I worked as an HIV Specialist at the UNICEF Ukraine Country Office. I may consider moving abroad again and working at one of the UNICEF offices.

I am, even though it's hard sometimes and stressful. But when I read stories of children and families UNICEF helped and made their lives better, it makes all the hard work worthwhile.

22. Svetlana, have you visited many countries as a result of working for UNICEF? If so, which was the most difficult?

I don't travel much now in my role at UNICEF UK but have visited over 40 countries and I have daily communication with UNICEF country offices all over the world. Some of the hardest things I witnessed have been babies dying needlessly in remote communities of Nepal because their mothers don't have access to health facilities/healthcare workers and basic medicines, speaking to children who have been uprooted by the conflict in Ukraine and suffering from psychosocial trauma, or children living with HIV being abandoned by their parents and facing stigma and discrimination in their communities, school and even health facilities.

23. Do you feel that there is discrimination in health care against those with special needs?

Yes, children with disabilities are among the most marginalized people in every society. A range of barriers limits their ability to function in daily life, access social services (like education and health care) and engage in their communities. These include: physical barriers

– for example, buildings, transportation, toilets and playgrounds that cannot be accessed by wheelchair users, communication and information barriers – such as textbooks unavailable in Braille, or public health announcements delivered without sign language interpretation, attitudinal barriers – like stereotyping, low expectations, pity, condescension, harassment and bullying. Each of these is rooted in stigma and discrimination that reflect negative perceptions of disability associated with ableism: a system of beliefs, norms and practices that devalues people with disabilities. Children with severe or multiple disabilities also tend to have a particularly hard time getting their needs met. Therefore, UNICEF works hard to transform negative public attitudes and support the full participation of children with disabilities in society.

24. Svetlana, what inspired you to work for UNICEF?

I grew up in a small developing country Kyrgyzstan. When I was young, I faced a lot of challenges and hardships myself. But through hard work and determination, I was able to get a high-quality education which allowed me to work for large international charities and manage big health-related projects. Because I know how it feels to grow up in a challenging environment and not have all the conditions for a happy childhood, I thought I can help other children to have a better childhood and set a strong foundation for them to fulfil their potential and achieve their dreams and aspirations.

25. Svetlana, was it your dream to work for UNICEF since you were a child?

No! I dreamed of being a ballet dancer when I was young but then I decided I wanted to be a diplomat when I was in high school. So I studied International Relations which led me to the global health work and then UNICEF.

26. Svetlana, What is your favourite part about working for UNICEF?

The most favourite part about my job is the ability to work with various Country Offices on a daily basis, learn about their health programmes on the ground and help them secure funding for children in most need.

27. Which country has the best health care and why?

It's hard to name one country with the best healthcare system because all health systems vary across the world and how they function depends on a variety of factors. But studies show that some of the best health systems are in Scandinavian countries, such as Denmark and Sweden, and Western Europe, like UK, Germany, or France, where everyone has access to high-quality free healthcare.

28. What motivates you every day?

"I think what motivates me every day is having a purpose and leading a meaningful life. Every day I want to make a difference in other people's lives, be it designing health projects for children all over the world, being a supportive colleague, friend, and family member, or showing kindness to complete strangers and putting smile on their faces. This kind of impact, small or large, one can make is a very rewarding experience." Svetlana

29. What motivates you every day?

"I was so impressed by UNICEF's work in the UK, and around the world, both with smaller groups of young people, like the Youth Advisory Board, and through campaigns like OutRight, which reach thousands of children and young people!" Grace

"Coming to work at UNICEF UK was a chance for me to be part of bigger children's rights projects than I'd been part of before and where better to work on children's rights, than UNICEF!" Jess

"I joined UNICEF because I believe that every child deserves a fair chance in life and UNICEF is one of the biggest defenders of children's rights." Svetlana