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I, **hara bastas** , hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology.

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Student's name: **hara bastas**

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee chair: Steven Carlton-Ford, PhD

Committee member: Paula Dubeck, PhD

Committee member: Annulla Linders, PhD



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Girls' Rights: An Insight into the United Nations from 1995-2010

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By

hara bastas

M.S., Minnesota State University, Mankato, 2004
B.A., California State University, Long Beach, 2002

Dissertation Committee:

Steve Carlton-Ford, Professor of Sociology, University of Cincinnati, Chair
Anna Linders, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Cincinnati, Member
Paula Dubeck, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Cincinnati, Member

Abstract

Within the context of the sociology of children and youth, a feminist human rights analysis that applies framing processes is used to describe the development of girls' rights within the United Nations over the past 15 years. With a human rights analysis, the social construction of girls' rights can be characterized as "active in the sense that something is being done, and processual in the sense of a dynamic, evolving process" (Benford & Snow 2000). The development of girl's rights as "active and processual" within the UN is characterized through three core framing processes: 1) *diagnostic*: the social construction of the social problems of the girl child demonstrate a problematic condition in need of change, a condition which is created by global inequality and gender discrimination; 2) *prognostic*: the use of girls' rights as a strategy to understand problematic conditions of the girl child as violations of her rights; and 3) *motivational*: the ways in which the agency and advocacy of girl children, their adult allies, and social institutions play central roles in creating social change.

Through the use of content analysis with the following three sets of documents from multiple components of the UN system, the data collectively demonstrates how inadequate social conditions of the girl child become the basis for framing girls' rights: 1) annual reports from transnational organizations affiliated with the UN (*United Nations Children's Fund, Plan International and Coalition for Adolescent Girls*); 2) official UN documents (*Third General Assembly, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Committee on the Rights of the Child*); and 3) documents from UN sponsored Non-Governmental Organizations (the *Convention on the Rights of the Child, Working Group on Girls*, and the *Commission on the Status of Women*).

My dissertation is dedicated to all the girl children who came before me, especially two of my most favorite women as a girl child - my grandmother, Harriet Kosty and my great-aunt Angie Gredalas. May their memories be eternal.

I would like to thank my family for actually being a family -- for their amazing love and continual support in all aspects of my life.

For my mother, *Kathy*: who when I was young and needed to complete biography reports for school would take trips with me to the local library. When we looked through countless books on the shelves -- she would pull out the ones that focused on women's lives. After all, she said, why wouldn't I want to learn about other women?? So I learned early on about all of contributions of female firsts -- Maria Mitchell, Elizabeth Blackwell, Babe Didrikson and the power of what women could become.

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What more could a girl child want or ever need?

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I. Introduction

Creating awareness of the girl child is in many ways the foundational step in advocating for girls' rights. An understanding of girls' rights depends upon an acknowledgement that the girl child has rights at all, and that her rights can, in fact, be violated. Due to her precarious position within the social order, as she is trapped within the confines of a social category of age that denies her agency, and of a gender that denies her legitimacy, the girl child:

[I]s the young plant that
gets neither light nor water

She is the flower that would
have blossomed but cannot

Half fed and half heartedly educated
she gets only half wage for her labour

The country got is freedom
but she continues to be bonded.

As Kamla Bashin (1990) describes in her poem above, the complex relationships between the girl child and society are reflected within all major social institutions. Data on the lives of children, gathered as recently as 2010, helps us begin to understand the ways in which the girl child's life is impacted: multiple forms of violence affect an estimated 500 million to 1.5 billion children in the world; exploitive child labor is a major part of the lives of 150 million children between the ages of 5 and 14; 145 million children are orphaned by state conflicts, wars, and diseases such as HIV/AIDS; and 18 million children are living with the effects of displacement due to natural disasters and wars (UNICEF 2010). Specifically, the severity of girl children's social inequities is demonstrated in these statistics: girls comprise the majority of the 101 million children worldwide not attending primary school; among young women in

the Global South, those living in rural areas are twice as likely to be married as those from cities; and 14 million young women around the world give birth between the ages of 15 and 19 (UNICEF 2010).

Focusing on the rights of the girl child, I will conduct a feminist, sociological, human rights analysis that uses framing processes to describe the development of girls' rights within the United Nations (UN) from 1995-2010. To frame the contemporary process of girls' rights trans-nationally, I will use content analysis to focus on three sets of documents: 1) Annual reports from transnational organizations affiliated with the UN; 2) official UN documents; and 3) documents from UN sponsored Non-Governmental Organizations. Collectively, the sets of documents illustrate a key component of my study: how the inadequate social conditions of the girl child become the basis for girls' rights advocacy within multiple levels of the UN system.

My research offers a primarily substantive contribution to the sociological subfields of children/youth and human rights by focusing on the social construction of girls' rights within the UN. Specifically, using the social movement theory of framing from Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow (2000), those involved in social movements negotiate three core framing tasks. Girls' rights within the framework of the UN can be better understood in terms of: 1) a problematic condition or situation in need of change (diagnostic framing); 2) naming who/what is responsible for changing the problematic condition/situation through a proposed "plan of attack" (prognostic framing); and 3) ways in which change can be enacted by providing a "call to arms" (motivational framing). For the purposes of my research, diagnostic framing focuses on how, within the UN, the *social problems of the girl child become socially constructed*; prognostic framing focuses on *how girls' rights become used as*

a strategy to bring attention to the social problems of the girl child; and motivational framing focuses on *identifying key advocates for girls' rights*. Within the UN, the social problems of the girl child become socially constructed through global inequality and gender discrimination (diagnostic framing). Girls' rights are discussed within the UN through the understanding that the problematic conditions of the girl child are violations of her rights (prognostic framing). Agency is created through the acknowledgment of the girl child within her own lived experiences, with key advocacy for girls' rights represented through individual and institutional support (motivational framing).

To ensure that individual nations do not overlook their girl children, the UN has become the central location for girls' rights within the international community, particularly during the past fifteen years. A discussion of girls' rights can be traced through multiple components of the UN system. Key components of the 'new' sociology of childhood, which argues for childhood as a social construction, and for the child as a social actor, will guide this discussion. Other key ideas originate from the sociology of human rights--specifically children's rights--where: 1) rights are important because those who have them can exercise agency; agents are decision-makers, and agents, as rights-bearers, can participate in society; and 2) rights are also an important advocacy tool, a weapon which can be deployed in the battle to secure recognition of lived experiences (Freeman 2007). With a human rights analysis, the social construction of girls' rights can be characterized as "active in the sense that something is being done, and processual in the sense of a dynamic, evolving process" (Benford & Snow 2000).

By analyzing children's social problems, as a society we are able (even if we are unwilling) to recognize the ways in which age as a social category is utilized to justify social

inequality, either as an intended or unintended consequence. With constant change over the life course, age often becomes erroneously classified as a social category that is temporary, a “stage” to pass through and therefore incapable of fostering a collective identity.

Sociologists offer a more accurate understanding of age, particularly in the early part of the life-course through: 1) children’s agency (the ways in which children construct their own semi-autonomous social worlds); 2) children as persons (not property, not subjects, not objects of social concern or control; but as participants in social processes, rather than as social problems); and 3) childhood as socially constructed (Freeman 1998: 436). Over time, sociological understanding of the differing conditions of children has given rise to support for the children’s rights movement, enabling a shift from protecting children to protecting the rights of children.

The children’s rights movement has also analyzed the ways in which the life of a child differs on the basis of gender. From a human rights perspective, an examination of the ways in which gender is created and supported by various social institutions demonstrates how gender inequality is maintained in a very structured and systematic way. The impact of gender inequality can be seen across the life course through the “perilous path” of girlhoods, particularly pronounced in the Global South. Discrimination against the girl child begins at pre-birth (through intra-uterine fetal sex-determination and termination of “female pregnancies”), moves into *infancy* (through female infanticide by commission or omission), and persists through *early girlhood* with neglect resulting in high mortality and higher morbidity (through less health care and less food). Continued inequality manifests through exploitation within *middle and late girlhood* (early assumption of domestic responsibilities and sibling care, discontinuation of education, hazardous work, and high rates of morbidity

and malnutrition) and ends with physical stress and exhaustion as an *adolescent* (through early marriage, teenage pregnancy, anemia, stunted personal growth, perinatal complications, low/no education, repeated pregnancies, maternal morbidity and decreased economic productivity) (UNICEF 1990).

The girl child's navigation of this "perilous path" denies her access to central social institutions such as the economy, education, family, and government; her lack of influence on the larger structure directly impacts the decisions that are, in turn, made for her. So, if a girl child is not allowed formal education by her family and/or the government, then her chances for higher education are lowered, as are her opportunities for economic independence. If a girl child begins her family early, then her chances of acquiring educational and economical stability for her family and herself are greatly reduced. If a girl child is sold into slavery, her self-worth and hopes for a better life become greatly diminished, and she must work on recreating herself throughout her entire life. If a girl child is not taken seriously in her everyday interactions across her life course, then the ways she identifies herself, and how society identifies her, will be misaligned. Ultimately, if a nation's girl children lack rights as girls, then a nation is taking a clear (even if implicit) political stance that gender inequality is part of the nations' ideology. Since the girl child is met with resistance from multiple social institutions across her life-course, gender inequality ultimately becomes the basis for understanding and advocating for girls' rights.

II. Theorizing Girls' Rights

Theorizing girls' rights begins at the intersection of two subfields within (and sometimes outside of) sociology, relying upon key concepts from the following two areas: 1) the *Sociology of Children/Youth*, particularly the girl child as a social construction and social

actor; and 2) the *Sociology of Human Rights*, particularly children's rights, and the ways in which the social conditions of the girl child allow for advocacy of girls' rights. It is within the fringes of these subfields that the girl child's social inequality can be identified and explored from a feminist sociological analysis within the United Nations (UN). More specifically within the UN, the social construction of the social problems of the girl child demonstrate problematic conditions in need of change. Girls' rights is the strategy used to bring attention to girl children and their social problems, whereby adult and institutional allies support girls' rights and ultimately create lasting social change.

Working explicitly within this context, I argue that through three components of the UN system, particularly through official branches of the UN and transnational and non-governmental organizations affiliated with the UN, that the transnational dialogue of girls' rights can be traced from 1995-2010. Since "social movements are not just prisoners of their national boundaries, but are profoundly shaped by their international environments," girls' rights can be discussed beyond the borders of individual nation-states (Jenkins & Klandermans 1995: 33). Paying particular attention to the UN, one can analyze the links between social conditions of children and advocacy for children's rights, and more specifically, how a focus on the girl child becomes central in framing girls' rights. In the process of framing, "the cultural context consists, in part, of popular awareness (and acceptance) of international human rights norms. Therefore, the definition and expansion of these norms as well as broadening public awareness of them has been an essential part of the movement's strategy" (Smith 1995: 546-7). In other words, exposing the social conditions of girl children around the world can garner public support, and girls' rights can be advocated for within the context and norms of international UN conventions.

In this capacity, the work of the UN can be understood as “intermediating between the state and the social movements [as] *the political representation system*, that is, the set of institutions that claim to represent social interests,” and it can in turn help institutionalize the ideology needed to argue for the rights of the girl child (Jenkins 1995: 15). In advocating for the rights of the girl child, successful mobilization requires human rights frames that “address inequitable structural relations as a fundamental aspect of individual and group rights” (Smith 1995: 556). The four principles of universality, accountability, indivisibility, and participation are central to the human rights framing processes (UN 2010). *Universality* focuses on the most marginalized groups by re-centering women and children in the discussion, therefore offering a place for the girl child. *Accountability* recognizes children and women as “holders of rights, rather than objects of charity,” allowing for the girl child to be seen as an agent, capable of having rights. *Indivisibility* seeks to meet the rights of the “whole child”; no single right is prioritized over another, in the interest of a more holistic understanding of the girl child. Finally, *participation* is the realization of human rights through individual and community empowerment, such as community organizations that advocate with and on behalf of the girl child. Through a human rights frame, the social conditions of the girl child can become part of a discussion of girls’ rights. The girl child can become an active agent, capable of social change, despite the ways in which social conditions might impede agency.

Various sociological scholars have looked at the ways in which framing can be used to represent the ideological components of social movements and to ultimately create social change. For example, framing has been used to understand American Indian protests (Baylor 1996), labor disputes in the United States (Babb, Clemens, Cornfield & Fletcher 1996),

religious pro-choice movements (Evans 1997), gay and lesbian movements (Jenness 1994, 1995), women's rights/feminist movements (Taylor, V. 1999, Heitlinger 1996), and multiple environmental issues (Cormier & Tindall 2005, Capek 1993, Entman & Rojecki 1993). However, few sociological works focus on the framing of children within society. Scholars who have done so have focused on the following: the need to "regulate" a child once labeled with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (Rafalovich 2001); the "discourse of fear" within current popular news featuring the social problems of children (Altheide 2002); the use of children on both sides of the argument for claiming a "confederation" in 1948 Newfoundland (Stanbridge 2007); the forms of cultural value that children provide in determining couple's fertility choices (Nauck 2007); and social movements surrounding the politics of child sexual abuse in the United States (Whittier 2009). None of the sociological studies that I found have focused specifically on the framing of girls' rights, and my research fills that void.

Using the original discussion of Benford and Snow (2000) on framing and its significance for offering meaning-making, girls' rights can be traced within the UN from the official introduction in 1995 at the *Fourth World Conference for Women* in Beijing until my chosen end date of 2010 (for purposes of this project). Benford and Snow discuss how social movements use framing to create meaning through 1) *diagnostic framing*: delineating a problematic condition or situation in need of change; 2) *prognostic framing*: naming who/what is responsible for changing the problematic condition/situation through a proposed "plan of attack"; and 3) *motivational framing*: identifying ways that change can be enacted. Over the the past fifteen years, the girl child's social conditions have been framed in order to demonstrate the existence of a *problematic condition in need of change* created by various

forms of inequality and discrimination against the girl child. The larger social contexts in which the girl child lives offer an understanding of how the girl child (and ultimately girlhoods) become identified by the UN. If there is no understanding of a problematic condition and, in turn, of *who/what is responsible*, then there exists no need to change the social circumstances surrounding the problematic condition. Specifically, tracing the evolution of girls' rights over time can bring more social awareness of the social problems of the girl child, ultimately revealing ways to *enact change*, with the aim of decreasing the social problems of the girl child. By identifying the ways in which the social conditions of the girl child are similarly socially constructed across time and space, the process of framing allows the acknowledgment of gender inequality to provide the impetus for the organization of girls' rights.

Understanding Children's Rights

The notion of children having and advocating from their own standpoint is a rather recent phenomena. The major shift in societal perceptions of children came in 1989 with the nearly universal ratification of the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC). The issues faced by children ages 0-18 became part of an international dialogue through the CRC, advocating for the *empowerment*, rather than the *protection*, of children. The CRC's ratification was the culmination of a decades-long process. As early as 1924, the human rights discourse included children through the *Declaration of Geneva* (adopted by the *League of Nations*), focusing on the "provision of care for all children" through five specific principles (Chill & Kilbourne 2001:154). With the "descent into a world war that brutalized children's rights," the *League of Nations* collapsed in the late 1930s, negatively impacting the ways in which children were viewed and, therefore, treated. It wasn't until 1959 that the

Declaration of the Rights of the Child was created, which was to become the most comprehensive political commentary on children's rights at the time where "every child, without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family" (Chill & Kilbourne 2001:154). Despite increasing recognition of children's rights by the UN, it wasn't until 1966 that children became part of the legally binding instruments of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. Both of these UN covenants created an understanding of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for children. This comprehensive understanding of children's rights was re-established in 1979 with the *UN Year of the Child*. The process for ensuring children's official position within the UN ended with the creation of the CRC (made within "record time" for any human rights treaty) with the production of fifty-four articles that advocated for a life based on the following four principles: 1) non-discrimination; 2) the best interests of the child; 3) the right to life, survival and development; and 4) respect for the views of the child. *See Appendix A for the CRC*.

For the first time in world history, the complexity of children's lives became described in terms of differences between: 1) continent and region; 2) gender; 3) household income; 4) urban/rural residence; 5) mother's education level; 6) disability; and 7) minority or indigenous status. Moreover, the CRC identified three main types of rights: 1) *provision*: the right to minimum standards of family life and access to parental care, health, education, social security, physical care, play, recreation, culture and leisure. Examples include the right to a healthy, toxin-free environment, the right to have contact with parents in prison,

and the right to mental health services; 2) *protection*: the right to be safe from discrimination, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation, substance abuse, injustice and conflict. Examples include the right to be safe going to and from school, the right to be safe from exploitation through child pornography, and the right to be safe from family violence; and 3) *participation*: civil and political rights that include the right to a name and identity, to be consulted and taken into account, to physical integrity, to information, to freedom of speech and opinion and to challenge decisions made on behalf of the child. Examples include children's right to be heard in family and criminal court, and to have their views respected and taken into account after trauma and abuse. In 2000, the UN adopted two optional protocols to the original CRC: 1) *Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict*, prohibiting compulsory recruitment to the armed forces for any child under 18, and 2) *Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography*, focusing on increasing public awareness and providing services to child victims.

The contemporary dialogue of children's rights within the UN illustrates the dynamic nature of defining, claiming and executing notions of "rights" (Bunch 1995). Specifically, using the framing of "rights" becomes necessary for children, since:

- Rights are important because those who have them can exercise agency. Agents are decision-makers. As agents, right-bearers can participate.
- Rights are also important advocacy tools, weapons that can be employed in the battle to secure recognition
- Rights offer legitimacy and can be employed to pressure groups, lobbies, and campaigns, to both direct and indirect action...they offer a way in; they open doors (Freeman 2007:8).

By ratifying the CRC, "national governments...committed themselves to protecting and ensuring children's rights and they...agreed to hold themselves accountable for this commitment before the international community" (UNICEF 2010). The commitment becomes significant since children's representation in the international community is

congruent within one of the major goals of the human rights movement: the protection of democratic rights and principles (Smith 1995). With the ratification of the CRC by all but two of the participating UN nations (Somalia, for lack of a national government, and the United States, for ideological inconsistencies), the CRC was the only UN treaty to receive such widespread international support. A nation can sign a treaty with provisions, but until it ratifies (preceded by an act of signature) or accesses (not preceded by an act of signature) the treaty does not legally bind the nation's commitment to its children. In other words, the CRC sets the standards for nations to aspire to, and it supports these expectations through international law; domestically each nation then implements the treaty through national legislation, supported by economic and judicial systems. In a discussion of rights, this becomes important in framing the discourse, since

rights cannot be truly realized without changes in the structures and relationships of power in all their forms: changes in who makes decisions, in whose voice is heard, in what topics are seen as legitimate, in people's sense of relative self-worth, and in the confidence people have to speak out (Chapman 2009:167).

Due to the high level of support for the CRC and the multiple ways in which it could influence social change, various scholars have discussed, interpreted, and analyzed the impact, effectiveness, and inclusion of all children within the CRC. One of the most comprehensive discussions of the significance of scholarly work identified three main themes prevalent in children's rights from 1998-2007. Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveld (2009) found the first theme to focus on *autonomy and participation rights as the norm in children's rights practice and policy*. Prior to the CRC, children were considered as incompetent and in need of protection due to their heightened vulnerability as children. By arguing for the child as an *active agent* in the construction of their life, and as a *being* who

has rights, the contemporary children's rights movement became labeled a "counter-movement" (Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveldel 2009).

The second theme is *children's rights versus parental rights*, where the dichotomy becomes created due to competing interests as defined by the state on how "best" to protect the rights of both social groups. Various scholars have supported the larger argument that we need to move beyond this dichotomy in order to understand the ways in which children's rights and parental rights are relational rather than oppositional. Only with this understanding will parenthood be seen as a process that changes over one's life-course; whereas "children become more and more competent and are considered to be capable of exercising their rights autonomously, parents have to fulfill fewer parental responsibilities to support their children in realizing these rights" (Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveldel 2009:525). In other words, as children age, so does their level of 'competency'; the relationships that children have with their parents change over time, and the absolute reliance of children on their parents decreases as children become more self-reliant.

The third theme concerns the *global children's rights industry*, where a legal positivist framework creates a "global human rights industry," by establishing standards for implementation and monitoring across borders (Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveldel 2009). The legal positivist framework allows for an understanding that children's rights become "recognized in international and national law rather than rights in a moral or philosophical sense" (Clapham 2007: 23). Yet, within a "global human rights industry," children's rights are presented as the new norm in policy and practice without questioning. This can become problematic when the discourse on children's rights does not take into consideration the social environments of children themselves (Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie

and Vandeveldel 2009). It is here where we also see the ways rights have shifted from being used by lawyers, specialist NGOs, and UN treaties to development agencies. This rights-based approach is now integrated into the language, commitments and promotional materials of development agencies themselves (Hickey and Mitlin 2009).

It is through the CRC that an understanding of autonomy and participation become seen as the norm in children's rights, practice and policy. The pressure to engage in the battle between children's rights and parent's rights increases, when there shouldn't even be a battle to begin with. Then the "global children's rights industry" itself becomes so focused on standardization, that the differences between children themselves become ignored; this goes against what the CRC was meant to represent in the first place. As Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveldel remind us, "research that provides empirical evidence on the impact that the rhetoric of children's rights has in daily practice assumes a shift from analyzing the text of the UNCRC towards examining the contexts in which the UNCRC is applied" (2009:529). It is with this reminder that my research fills the gap by examining the significance of age and gender as contexts for girls' rights.

Sociological Analysis of Children

With a transformation in sociological thought regarding children, the three aforementioned themes within children's rights literature (as discussed by Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveldel 2009) can be further used to provide the backdrop necessary to understand children's rights, and more specifically girls' rights, over time. Until the 1980s, children were discussed primarily through issues related to deviance, since mainstream sociological research did not place children, either collectively or as individuals,

within larger societal systems (Shanahan 2007). Rather than focusing on the lives of children in the present, society viewed children as what they will “become” in the future as adults (Corsaro 2011). Understanding children in the context of the future, the original sociological scholarly work focused on the process of socialization, categorizing children mainly as *passive* through deterministic theories rather than as *active* through constructivist theories or *interpretive* through collective reproduction theories. As a result, childhood sociologist William Corsaro states “children are pushed to the margins of the social structure by more powerful adults (including social theorists), who focus instead on the potential and the threat of children to present and future societies,” in turn constructing children as social problems rather than focusing on the faulty social structure in which children exist (2011:8).

Over time, with a change in sociology itself -- with the ‘inclusion’ of more subordinate groups and the rise of constructivist and interpretive theoretical perspectives -- children were on the path to “rediscovery” (Corsaro 2011:8). Scholar Karen Wells describes how “the ‘new’ sociology of childhood established a field of inquiry about children (the lived experiences of children) and childhood (the concept that informs expectations and attitudes towards children) that sought to understand children’s lifeworlds as they were lived” (2009: 14). More specifically, the concept of childhood becomes categorized as a social construction, where children’s lives are continuously being shaped and reshaped through active interactions with multiple social institutions (Shanahan 2007). It is within the larger context of the change in the discipline that the girl child can have a legitimate place within the “new” sociology of childhood.

Legal sociologist Michael Freeman (1998) argues that sociologists can apply their knowledge to children’s rights by understanding the following: 1) childhood as a social

construction, in which there are many childhoods rather than a one single, universal, cross-cultural childhood; and 2) the child as a social actor. Together, these two points allow for children's rights to be discussed in terms of: 1) *attending to specific issues affecting children*, such as disability, education, healthcare, public space, refugees, street children and youth justice (M. Barry, P. Alderson, L. Campbell, V. Coppock, J. Ennew, D. Haydon, T. Jeffs, V. Morrow, and J. Muncie 2002); 2) *listening to children and young people in terms of their everyday experiences* (M. Barry, T. Hyder and G. Lansdown, 2002); 3) *listening to young people when researching their lives* (A. Best 2008 and P. Kirby 2002); and 4) *offering comparative perspectives across and within nations* (M. Rayner, A. West, and A. Vandekerckhove 2002). Through a transformation of sociological thought, children's rights become linked to the CRC in multiple scholarly works that allow for the inclusion of all children, including the girl child (Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveldel 2009).

Through a wider understanding of the social locations and experiences of children, the discussions about children's rights have shifted over time from child-saving in the early 1900s (protecting children from the labor markets, the streets, and poverty within the Progressive era of the United States) to child-promoting (children's rights of personhood, integrity, and autonomy on a global scale) in contemporary times. This transformation of attitudes about children allows them to be viewed, and therefore treated, as active participants rather than passive recipients. As youth sociologist Jeremy Roche reminds us, "the shifts in thinking about children will be uneven, contested and championed in different ways, in different places and in this sense the 'politics of childhood' (and 'children's rights') will intensify," but it is only then that the ability to link children's social lives with their rights becomes possible (73). By locating the girl child specifically within the "politics of

childhood,” a sociological understanding of the girl child can be applied that offers a space promoting girlhood as a social construction and the girl child as a social actor. These two parts become particularly significant in a discussion of girls’ rights and form the basis of this project.

Understanding Girls’ Rights

The complexity of children’s rights is revealed through multiple critiques offered by various feminist legal scholars regarding the CRC’s lack of attention to gender. Over time, children’s rights became synonymous with the rights of the boy child, rather than including both the boy and girl child. Within the UN, the only direct attention to the girl child was given in collaboration with the *Fourth World Conference for Women* in Beijing in 1995 (six years after the CRC) under the auspices of the *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW - 1979). It was in Beijing that *Section L* - “The Girl Child” was added to the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, focusing specifically on the rights of the girl child. *Section L* called for particular attention to the following important issues affecting the girl child: 1) education; 2) gender-based violence; 3) girl soldiers; 4) health; 5) labor; 6) participation in social, economic and political life, and 7) trafficking. *See Appendix B for Section L.*

The UN system also allows for a discussion of the girl child both directly and indirectly within the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs), adopted in 2000 by UN participating nations to ensure that “human development reaches everyone, everywhere. If these goals are achieved, world poverty will be cut by half, tens of millions of lives will be saved, and billions more people will have the opportunity to benefit from the global

economy” (<http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics.shtml>). In total there are eight MDGs with identified targets to be reached by 2015. The first three are: 1) *eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*: specifically relevant to the girl child is target 1b - achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people; 2) *achieve universal primary education*: target 2a - ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling; and 3) *promote gender equality and empower women*: target 3a - eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education.

The next three MDGs focus on issues of health: 4) *reduce child mortality*: target 4a - reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five; 5) *improve maternal health*: target 5a - reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio; target 5b: achieve universal access to reproductive health; and 6) *combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases*: target 6a - halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS; target 6b - achieve universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it; target 6c - halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

The last two MDGs concern larger issues of sustainability and indirectly affect the girl child: 7) *ensure environmental sustainability* and 8) *develop a global partnership for development*. Individually and collectively, all eight MDGs allow for the documentation of the progress of girls’ rights and implementation of the CRC as a reality for girl children (Sen and Hadju 2009).

By paying attention to the social conditions of the girl child and placing her rights central to the discussion, we allow for a feminist, sociological analysis. Understanding the girl child as socially constructed becomes particularly important as one looks at the change in

representation that occurred during the late nineteenth century when young people were disciplined directly by the state and its agents, compared with the early twenty-first century where young people are demanded to be flexible and self-realizing through dislocation, flux, and globalization (Harris 2004). Where previously the goal had been to make youth an embodiment of national progress, as society has become more “modernized,” girlhood specifically became identified as:

a stand in for possibilities and anxieties about new identities [for youth] more generally. That is, the appropriate ways to embrace and manage the political, economic and social conditions of contemporary societies are demonstrated in the example of young women, through the ideal of the future girl. She is imagined, and sometimes imagines herself, as best able to handle today’s socioeconomic order (Harris, 2004: 2).

Therefore, in the process of understanding girls’ rights within the UN, we must be mindful of the ways that girls’ rights become socially constructed by individuals or groups who are compelled to advocate with the language of the human rights movement (Clapham 2007). Taking the issues that affect the girl child and specifically identifying them within the context of girls’ rights, feminist anthropologist Elisabeth Croll argues that “just in terms of nomenclature - girls’ rights appears less juvenile and less passive [than children’s rights] suggesting [girls as] active agents engaged in rights dialogues and other participatory approaches” (2006: 1289). With this understanding, girls’ rights can be further framed within a feminist intersectional perspective that allows for a synthesis of age and gender, requiring the children’s rights movement to challenge its gender-neutral discourse and adopt an approach that specifically labels the intersectionality of sexism and girls’ rights (Taefi 2009). Advocating specifically for girls’ rights follows the pattern where “the rhetoric of rights is as much about shifting our imagination as it is about specific demands for legal change” (Roche 2002: 73). Using a sociological imagination, as a society we can begin to

transform cultural norms of gender and age and institutionally support and encourage social change for girl children.

Within the UN, gender- and age-based discrimination can be contextualized and given more global attention, thus potentially offering a transformation in the current systems that perpetuate inequalities. I am not claiming the existence of “universality” in the lives of the girl child around the world, but rather reflecting on the ability of the UN’s framework to capture the differences. If we focus solely on the differences among the experiences of girl children, then the larger social conditions will not be discussed at all; were the UN to remain uninvolved in the framing of social issues, there would exist little or no transnational dialogue at all. Instead, each nation would be left to deal individually with similar problems affecting the girl child; solutions would be harder to identify and implement without that broader conversation. A focus on the girl child as a collective provides a way--namely through her social conditions--to directly argue, advocate, and promote rights for all girl children. Therefore, it becomes imperative for her to have her own location within the master frame of human rights so that the “strategic and practical needs in childhood” can provide the impetus for collective action (Croll 2006). In order to effectively argue for girls’ rights, we must talk about the girl child as her own social category and still examine the diversity of girlhoods. For example, how are age and gender used to argue for the girl child at the beginning of the life course at age 0 as well as at age 18? In other words, the intensity and severity of a particular social condition will most likely change across the life of a girl child, but the same social condition affects the girl child no matter what her age is. If we use the example of healthcare, specifically maternal health care, the girl child at the beginning of her life course is in many ways relegated to her own mother’s social conditions. But what

happens when she herself becomes an early mother? She now loses her rights as a child, but is not protected by women's rights either, since she is not viewed legally a woman if unmarried, but rather culturally as a woman. So where does she really stand in terms of her rights?

Without a larger understanding of girls' rights itself within the UN, and without the exposure of a general discourse on girls' rights, the contextualized differences of the girl child could become misplaced. There would be no structural understanding of the discrimination and social inequities that affect the lives of girl children. Instead, the social problems would become individually located, where the girl child would be the one solely responsible for finding solutions to "fix" her problems, when the problems involve multiple components of society. By combining multiple social categories, the differences can first be generalized and then spoken of in terms of "difference" to ensure a larger sociological understanding for the rather recent inclusion of a population within the transnational dialogue: the girl child.

Implications of girls' rights for children's rights and women's rights

The development of girls' rights happens through two frames that are often viewed in opposition to one another: parent's rights and women's rights. The larger implications of using a sociological perspective that understands childhoods as socially constructed, and children as capable of having agency, creates a level of contention that officially began with the CRC in 1989. Both adult allies and children themselves became challenged by parents' rights advocates who emphasized the rights of children as being in opposition to the rights of adults. In this process, ageism becomes coded in "parent's rights," where the dominant

group (parents) continues to exercise their power over the subordinate group (children). In reality, the CRC “exhibits strong respect for the role of the parents and family as the child’s primary support structure” throughout its numerous articles (Chill & Kilbourne 2001:155). By advocating for the rights of the child, children’s lives can be discussed in terms of lived experiences, ones that do not idealize adult-child relations since adults do not always or necessarily have the best interest of the child in mind. For example, when a girl child is sold into slavery (either as a sex slave or an indentured servant), an adult family member may have the child’s “best interest in mind” by thinking they are sending their child to a better place. But, instead the girl child becomes inadvertently “sold” into a horrible, life-threatening situation. When children must access their rights through adults, because they do not have legal access to their own rights, they become involved in a learned dependency that has not proven necessary for either children or adults (Freeman 2007). Therefore, if adults continue to idealize childhood as a period of innocence, then the real experiences of childhood will be overlooked and overshadowed by adult interests. By advocating for the rights of the child, relationships between adults and children can be viewed as interrelational, as interdependent, and with interactions that are reciprocal rather than autonomous.

With this realization, children can be viewed as a social group and childhood as a social phenomenon that changes across the life-course, reflecting a child’s needs in a particular time and space that includes the social condition of childhood as well as the children’s contribution to childhood (Mayall 2001,2002). For example, a child experiences her education differently from her caregiver, who grew up with other educational policies that were “devised and implemented by a generation of people whose ideas were formed by different influences” (Mayall 2001: 251). We can then better recognize how an eight-year-

old girl child has a different point of intersection with the structures surrounding her life than a seventeen-year-old girl child. However, each girl child is actively shaped by social structures in different ways, creating an important context for each of their lives. So that our larger cultural assumptions don't go unchallenged and in turn perpetuate social inequality, it becomes necessary to remember the reciprocal relationship between the social structure and children's agency as reflected in their everyday experiences.

The challenge of girls' rights is also present in the framing of women's rights. Particularly in welfare states, "feminist analysts have noted ways in which women's interests cohere and/or compete with children's interests" (Orloff 1996: 69). More specifically, women and children are seen as a single group, since women's work is often connected with motherhood (Gruskin and Plafker 2000). Because of this, the rights of women and girls become synonymous, when in fact grouping them together does a disservice to both; each has unique needs as they relate to rights. When girl children are not viewed as their own "independent subjects and rightsholders under national and international law" (Gruskin and Plafker 2000: 257) they become only side-notes in the framework of conventions within the UN community (Taefi 2009). Without an official document to call their own, girl children are viewed as competing with adult women. The end result is that both social groups fail to understand the various ways in which both girl children and adult women intersect with the social systems of age (generation) and gender (Alanen 2005).

Differentiating girls' rights from women's rights is necessary. Feminist human rights analysis has historically done very little to frame children's rights as they relate to key concepts of hierarchy, exclusion and power (Federle 1994). Children, especially girl children, are viewed by society as having little capacity and are thus placed at the bottom of

the social hierarchy, where they are viewed as undeserving of their own rights (Federle 1994). By using a new lens of feminist human rights analysis, one that pays attention to the experiences of the girl child, the reframing of girls' rights moves beyond traditional hierarchies, which force the girl child to the margins of society by rendering her invisible to those who are unwilling to see her.

Since the inclusion of the girl child is a rather recent phenomena in scholarly work, by combing her in the two sociological subfields of children/youth and human rights, we can better understand how sociological analysis can continue the dialogue of girls' rights. With an understanding of the ways in which social inequality creates disparities in social conditions and then, in turn, how the inadequate social conditions become the basis for advocating for girls' rights, the basis for framing girls' rights begins. Through framing, girls' rights can be considered as "active in the sense that something is being done, and processual in the sense of a dynamic, evolving process" (Benford & Snow 2000). Therefore, by tracing the ways in which girls' rights have evolved in the UN over the past fifteen years, my dissertation offers the perspective that girls' rights will only gain momentum in the future. In order for children's rights and women's rights to truly mobilize all members of their respective movements, they must address the girl child and ultimately identify girls' rights in its own entity.

Application of theoretical positions

It is within the context of the sociology of children/youth and human rights, focusing specifically on the rights of the girl child, that I will conduct a feminist human rights content analysis. My analysis uses framing processes to describe the development of girls' rights

within the United Nations (UN). Benford and Snow identify the three core framing tasks that become negotiated by those involved in social movements as 1) diagnostic framing: delineating a problematic condition or situation in need of change; 2) prognostic framing: determining who/what is responsible for changing the problematic condition/situation through a proposed “plan of attack”; and 3) motivational framing: identifying ways that change can be enacted by providing a “call to arms.” My research focuses on understanding, within the context of the UN, the following concepts: 1) how the social problems of the girl child become socially constructed to provide the argument a problematic condition in need of change (diagnostic framing); 2) how girls’ rights are used as a strategy to bring attention to the social problems of the girl child (prognostic framing); and 3) how agency and advocacy are used as ways to identify change (motivational framing).

Moving the girl child from the margins to the center of the analysis is a fundamental piece of feminist inquiry. Supported by feminist methodologist Shulamit Reinharz, “making the invisible visible, bringing the margin to the center, rendering the trivial important, putting the spotlight on [girls] as competent actors, understanding [girls] as subjects in their own right rather than objects for [boys]” all continue to be elements of feminist research (1992: 248). Expanding this definition into the realm of human rights, feminist human rights scholar and activist Charlotte Bunch states that “by questioning the most fundamental concepts of our social order...and in seeking to transform global policies in areas like development and [girls’ rights] so that they better incorporate and respond to [girls’] lives, we are also demonstrating that [girls’ issues] are not separate but are neglected aspects of these global agendas” (1995: 11). Within the global child’s rights agenda the value of intersectionality can be supported, so that girls’ rights can begin to emphasize a combination

of the social categories of gender and age, which are often neglected in the larger discourse on human rights, women's rights, and children's rights.

For my research, the three framing tasks offer critical points of entry to discuss the ways in which girls' rights become part of the UN and, in turn, center the girl child in the discussion of rights.

I. *Diagnostic Framing: The social problems of the girl child and the need for girls' rights*

1. What makes the social experience of the girl child unique?
2. What are the ways in which social inequality is perpetuated through gender and age?

The social problems of the girl child and therefore her need for rights as a girl result from the social construction of the girl child as a "voiceless ghost" in many cultures (Innes 1998). Doubly marginalized by her age and gender in various aspects of social life, the social institutions that leave the girl child the most voiceless are economy, education, family, government, and healthcare. Various UN-affiliated organizations identify these inequalities as social problems. When including the geographic location in the analysis, the discussion becomes even more complex. Neera Kuckreja Sohoni (1995) argues that although the girl child is demographically lost in the Global South, the girl child in the Global North is lost in a more poignant cultural, political and personal sense. In other words, no matter where the girl child lives, she is socially lost due to the structural inequality she encounters due to gender and age. For example, while the girl child is physically not being counted when born in the Global South, a girl child in the Global North continues to be socialized into traditional occupational choices despite her various opportunities for educational advancement. Either way, her opportunities for self-growth are marginalized. No matter where a girl child is

located, in either the physical or social world, she becomes “invisible” and therefore lacks legitimacy in the social system. Ultimately, that discrimination becomes the basis for social inequalities based on gender and age.

II. *Prognostic Framing: The United Nations as an actor in creating/promoting girls’ rights*

1. How does the UN become the main international actor responsible for the creation and maintenance of the girl child and girls’ rights?
2. What are the key themes that represent the girl child within the UN?

The United Nations was “originally conceived as a standing conference machinery and a big-power instrument devoted primarily to the maintenance of peace and security, [and over time] has quietly and without pre-established blueprint evolved into peacekeeper, a nation and state builder, a standard-and-norm-setting mechanism, and a provider of services” argues Fomerand (2007:251). By looking at how the UN continues to frame girls’ rights since their official entry into the organization in 1995, examining multiple aspects of the system can provide the opportunity to see what the UN considers the core social problems affecting the girl child. The UN can then utilize this information as the basis for understanding how, where, and when girls’ rights are violated. Standardizing girls’ rights creates a situation in which the girl child can have her own location in the general discourse of children’s rights, women’s rights, and human rights.

III. *Motivational Framing: The United Nations as a ‘target’ of activism*

1. In what ways is the UN utilized as a centralized location for enacting social change of the social location of the girl child and her rights?
2. How do non-governmental organizations influence the UN?

The international dialogue of girls’ rights is further traced by looking at non-governmental organizations (NGOs) associated with the UN. NGOs serve as advocacy

organizations representing a variety of different constituencies; they attempt to ensure that the UN's larger organizational decisions continue to include the needs of the community. Since the early 1990s, the UN's structure has shifted to include partnerships with NGOs and private business organizations, in the interest of supporting a development process primarily influenced by market forces (Clapham 2007). Through this process, NGOs are viewed as stakeholders within the larger UN system. This becomes significant for girls' rights, for it yields an understanding of how NGOs advocate for the girl child when the economic market is unstable; that is, her needs (and those of children in general) may be overlooked by the larger needs of the economic survival of each state. Thus, NGOs must exist to remind states of their economic, governmental, legal, judicial and social commitment to girls' rights as agreed upon with the UN.

III. Research Method

Through content analysis, I will focus on how girls' rights are constructed within the UN. Content analysis allows for an inductive, interpretive methodology that discovers patterns, themes, and categories within the data; by contrast, deductive analysis, applies an existing framework to the data being analyzed (Patton 2002). Furthermore, in a feminist interpretation of the data, "cultural documents [are understood to] also shape norms; they do not just reflect them," and therefore, "by discovering patterns between existing and missing documents, and with power/gender relations in the society of the time... new ties are made that help explain the current relation between gender and power and give some groups a greater sense of their own history" (Reinharz 1992: 163). Through content analysis, I look at how the social construction of girls' rights within the UN can be described, and in turn I offer an understanding of where the platform of girls' rights has been, where it is now, and where

it needs to go in the future.

Documents for Content Analysis

I will analyze three main sets of documents affiliated with the UN, each responsible for producing reports and supporting documents on the subject of the girl child. These documents will be used to demonstrate how the basis for a discussion of girls' rights is found in the unequal social conditions of the girl child. These three sets of documents are: 1) *Annual reports from transnational organizations affiliated with the UN*: statistical reports from various social organizations provide the context that best represents the girl child and the complexity of girlhoods around the world by demonstrating the disparity of social conditions of the girl child; 2) *Official UN documents*: multiple components that are directly part of the UN system focus on the girl child, providing the opportunity to untangle the discourse on girls' rights; and 3) *UN sponsored Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)*: key documents from NGOs illustrate the various ways advocacy for the girl child occurs within the UN and, by extension, spark international discussions of children, which can in turn foster discussions beyond the pages of official UN documents, focused on the systematic inequalities that girl children face on a daily basis (Chill & Kilbourne 2001).

1. Annual reports from transnational organizations affiliated with the UN - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), PLAN International, and Coalition for Adolescent Girls:

1a) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF):

UNICEF is guided by the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behavior towards children. As mandated by the United Nations General Assembly, UNICEF advocates for the protection of children's rights, helping meet their basic needs and

expanding children's opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children: victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation, and those with disabilities (UNICEF 2010).

Each year UNICEF publishes *The State of the World's Children*, which is considered the "most comprehensive analysis of global trends affecting children" (UNICEF 2010).

Since 1980, its yearly reports examine a key issue for children and present economic and social statistics on countries and territories worldwide, combining analyses, human-interest stories, country profiles and statistical data with specific references to children's well-being.

The most recent fifteen reports, from 1996-2011, are available online

(<http://www.unicef.org/sowc/index.html>) and are listed in *Appendix C*. Of the fifteen

available reports, I focus on the following two reports, separated by a decade, to reflect and compare the social conditions of the girl child over time. My only criteria was to search for the word "girl" within the available PDF file, which was found 94 times in the 2000

document and 57 times in the 2010 document. From both documents, the main themes

surrounding the girl child focused on: children's rights, education, gender discrimination,

global inequality, girls' rights, HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, poverty, slavery (both economic and

sexual), women's rights, and violence.

- *The State of the World's Children* (2000) – a 125-page document.

The report summary is as follows:

Seek[ing] to fan the flame that burned so brilliantly a decade ago when world leaders adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 and then confirmed their commitments for children and adolescents at the 1990 World Summit for Children. It is a call to leaders in industrialized and developing countries alike to reaffirm their promises for children. It is a call for vision and leadership within families and communities, where the respect for the rights of

children and women is first born and nurtured and where the protection of those rights begins. And it is a call to all people to realize a new dream within a single generation: a shared vision of children and women - indeed of humankind - freed from poverty and discrimination, freed from violence and disease (<http://www.unicef.org/sowc00/>).

- *Children's Rights: Celebrating 20 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – Special Edition* (2010) – a 100-page document.

Parts of the report summary are as follows:

On 20 November 2009, “the global community celebrated the 20th anniversary of CRC, the unique document that sets international standards for the care, treatment and protection of all individuals below age 18” (<http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/sowc/fullreport.php>).

The report “examin[es] the Convention’s evolution, progress achieved on child rights, challenges remaining, and actions to be taken to ensure that its promise becomes a reality for all children” (<http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/sowc/fullreport.php>).

1b) Plan International

Plan is a child-centered community development organization that works with children, their families, communities, organizations and local governments to bring about positive change (Plan 2010). Plan's work is linked to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* by further encouraging and helping children to take an active role in finding solutions to their problems and realizing their full potential in the areas of: 1) education; 2) health; 3) water and sanitation; 4) protection from violence; 5) economic security; 6) emergencies; 7) child participation; and 8) sexual health (Plan 2010). One of Plan’s primary campaigns – “Because I am a Girl” -- is intended “to fight gender inequality, promote girls' rights and lift millions of girls out of poverty” (Plan 2010). Ten reports were created from this campaign; all are available at <http://plan-international.org/girls/> and are listed in *Appendix C*. Of the ten reports, I focus on the following three reports to highlight the most contemporary social conditions of the girl child since Plan began its “Because I am a Girl” Campaign in 2007. Coding for the term “girl” seemed unnecessary since all reports

were created specifically with the girl child in mind. Instead, I coded for main themes available in each PDF file (discussed at the end of each report summary).

- *Because they are girls* – a 27-page document

(<http://plan-international.org/girls/resources/because-they-are-girls.php>).

The report summary is as follows:

This publication is the report of a desk study looking at the difference Plan projects and programmes have made to girls' lives. Fifteen years ago Plan formally adopted the achievement of gender equality as a critical component in its strategy to eliminate child poverty and realise child rights. Numerous quotes and case histories collected throughout the study demonstrate how Plan's work has changed lives. The projects have helped reduce gender discrimination and harm to girls and women, opened the doors for girls to gain new opportunities and skills, and triggered transformations in belief systems that blocked progress towards gender equality.

The main themes that emerged were: advocates for supporting girls' rights, children's rights, development, education, gender discrimination, gender equality, investing in girls, girls' rights, and poverty.

- *Youth Summary* – an 8-page document.

(<http://plan-international.org/girls/resources/youth-summary-2010.php>).

The report summary is as follows:

Because I am a Girl 2010 offers a youth-friendly summary of the State of the World's Girls Report, with a special focus on street girls and cyberspace. It was created in collaboration with Plan's Youth Advisory Panel. The summary draws on the Convention on the Rights of the Child to demonstrate the extent to which the rights of girls living on the street are being violated and offers young people a chance to speak up on their behalf and take action. While access to technologies is the key to ensuring girls across the globe have the knowledge and skills to fulfill their future aspirations, they also put girls and boys at risk everyday. Bullying, exploitation and exposure to inappropriate images are all part and parcel of accessing the 'Information Highway'. This summary provides young people with tips for staying safe online and asks them to take action to keep their friends safe too.

The main themes that emerged were: cities, girls' rights, making a difference, poverty, street girls, technologies, violations of rights (as afforded through the CRC).

- *Real Choices, Real Lives* – a 16-page document.

(<http://plan-international.org/girls/resources/real-choices-real-lives-2010.php>).

The report summary is as follows:

The “Real Choices, Real Lives” study was set up in 2007 to follow 142 girls from birth until their 9th birthday in 2015. It is featured every year in Plan's “Because I am a Girl” annual report on the state of the world's girls. Now in its 4th year, it continues to follow 130 girls in 9 different countries across the world - Brazil, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Benin, Togo, Uganda, Cambodia, Philippines and Vietnam. This year we have assessed their progress - looking at their lives and the experiences of their families and the communities they are part of - in the light of the Millennium Development Goals.

The main themes that emerged were: education, gender discrimination, girl-oriented data, health, lack of investment in girls, MDGs, poverty, and universality of girls’ rights.

1c) Coalition for Adolescent Girls (CAG)

Founded by the United Nations Foundation and the Nike Foundation in 2005, CAG consists of more than 30 leading international organizations, including its founding members of the International Center for Research on Women, the Population Council and the International Women’s Health Coalition. Adolescent girls (early adolescence is defined as 10-14, late adolescence as 15-19 and young women as 20-24) are the focus of the main CAG publication *Girls Count: A Global Investment and Action Agenda* in 2008. Supported by the Center for Global Development, the report focuses on the areas of: 1) health and well-being; 2) support systems (family, friends); 3) education; 4) economic opportunities; 5) chore burden; and 6) legal support. All information is available at

http://www.girlsdiscovered.org/about_us/

Since the main report focuses on the girl child, I coded solely for recurrent themes within the PDF file, which were: counting girls, collaboration of political sector with the private sector and civil society, education, economy, gender discrimination, giving girls a

‘fair share,’ health, investing in girls, and the well-being of girls as vital to society.

- *Girls Count: A Global Investment and Action Agenda (2009)* – a 55-page document.

(http://www.coalitionforadolescentgirls.org/girls_count)

Following is the summary:

This report is about why and how to put girls at the center of development. It is about how the health of economies and families depends on protecting the rights of and fostering opportunities for today’s girls. It is about how far girls in many developing countries have come, but also acknowledges how far we remain from a world in which girls’ rights are respected.

The main themes that emerged were: civil society, economic growth, girls count, government involvement, invest in adolescent girls, private sector, poverty reduction, and why girls matter.

2. Official UN documents - the Third General Assembly, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child

The UN becomes responsible for the creation and the maintenance of the girl child through documents from the *General Assembly*, *CRC* and *CEDAW* during the following years, focusing on the following themes:

- 1) 1995 (the collaboration of CRC and CEDAW for girl child inclusion in the UN)
- 2) 2003 (the heightened discussions of healthcare for the girl child)
- 3) 2007 (the heightened discussions of violence against the girl child).

I determined the above information by doing a general search with the word “girl” in the available PDF archived files. Some years between those listed above yielded very few or no findings of the word “girl” for all three UN bodies. So as to remain consistent with the discussion of the girl child across each year, I chose the years that had the most references to the term “girl” and then analyzed the documents for their respective themes.

2a) General Assembly (GA)

The *general assembly* is considered one of the principal organs of the UN, which consists of six main committees. I looked specifically at the work of the *third committee* as the basis of inquiry for discussing the girl child, since here social issues, such as the advancement of women and the protection of children, are centralized with the UN. The general assembly is the chief deliberating, policymaking, and representative body of the UN, since it plays a significant role in setting standards and codification of international law (<http://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>). The first session (1946) through the most recent sixty-fifth session (2010) are available through electronic archive. I focused on the *Resolutions* since they offer a concise representation of the UN's discussion of the girl child from multiple areas within the UN system, serving as formal expressions of the opinion or will of the UN with both a synopsis of the situation and suggestions for moving forward. Within each session, the resolutions listed in *Appendix C* mentioned 'girl' at least once, with the theme identified in the title. It is interesting to note that the number of resolutions that include the girl child increased over time.

- Fiftieth session - 1995(<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r50.htm>):
4 resolutions.
- Fifty-eighth session - 2003(<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r58.htm>):
5 resolutions.
- Sixty-second session - 2007(<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r62.shtml>):
8 resolutions.

***2b and 2c) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (C-CEDAW)
and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (C-CRC)***

Within the general assembly, *eight human rights treaty bodies* monitor implementation of the core international human rights treaties. A discussion of the girl child and girls' rights can be traced through two human rights treaty bodies of the UN, *CEDAW* and *CRC*. Each year both CEDAW and CRC focus on particular states for evaluation to ensure implementation of treaty expectations.

2b) C-CEDAW

Dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women, C-CEDAW is the principal global policy-making body within the UN (UN 2010). Every year, representatives of member states gather at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards, and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide (UN 2010). C-CEDAW held its first meeting in 1982, switching to bi-annual meetings in 1997. The proceedings of CEDAW's meetings are available in electronic archive (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/sessions.htm>) from the thirteenth session (1994) until the fortieth session (2008). By searching for the term "girl" in available PDF archives of the *Report on the Session* available in 1995 (fourteenth session), "girl" was mentioned 65 times, with the main themes of combating gender discrimination, education, traditional gender norms, violations of rights; in 2003 (twenty eighth session: January 13-31 and twenty ninth session: June 30- July 18), "girl" was mentioned 123 times, with the main themes of education, gender discrimination, gender stereotypes, and racial/ethnic

discrimination (especially against indigenous girls); and in 2007 (thirty seventh session: January 15-February 2, thirty eighth session: May 14-June 1 and thirty ninth session: July 23-August 10), “girl” was mentioned 414 times, with the main themes of creating awareness of discrimination against the girl child, education, exploitation (both economic and sexual), gender equality, gender stereotypes, health, and violence.

2c) C-CRC

Committed to monitoring children’s rights, the C-CRC consists of eighteen independent experts from multiple nations within the UN. To ensure that states are following protocol, each state is required to submit an initial report two years after ratification as well as progress reports every five years. C-CRC has fifty-seven sessions (2011). The third session (1993) is the first session available in an electronic archive at (<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/sessions.htm>), with two to three meetings held each year. I focused on the *Report on the Session* for the following sessions, by searching for the term “girl” in the appropriate PDF archived file. In the eighth session (1995), “girl” was listed 68 times, with the main themes of gender discrimination, global priority of women’s and children’s rights, the link between women’s rights and girls’ rights, and vulnerable groups of girls; in the thirty second session (2003) “girl” was listed 36 times, with the main themes of creating disaggregated data specifically on the girl child, education, gender stereotypes, health, poverty and violence; in the thirty third session (2003) “girl” was listed 51 times, with the main themes of education, traditional gender norms, health, and non-discrimination; in the forty fifth session (2007) “girl” was listed 18 times, with the main themes of creating awareness, education, health, and sexual exploitation.

3) Documents from UN sponsored Non-Governmental Organizations - the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Working Group on Girls, and the Commission on the Status of Women

3a) NGO for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (NGO-CRC)

Comprised of a network of 79 national and international non-governmental organizations that work together to facilitate the implementation of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the NGO-CRC was formed in 1983 when members of the group were actively involved in the drafting of the CRC. General comments from 2001-2010 are available at <http://www.childrightsnet.org/>. In total, the NGO-CRC has created twelve general comments, which are listed in *Appendix C*. The main purpose of a general comment is to promote implementation of the CRC and assist state parties in fulfilling their reporting obligations by monitoring state party reports (<http://www.childrightsnet.org/>). The general comments offer an insight into the specific areas that the NGO-CRC highlights, in many ways influencing how the girl child then becomes incorporated into the general discourse of the UN.

I focused on the general comments that identified the girl child the most, using a search of the word “girl” in each PDF archive. The general comments with the respective number of times “girl” was found and their themes are as follows: 1) *Adolescent health and development* (10 times); 2) *HIV/AIDS and the rights of the child* (9 times); and 3) *The right to be heard* (7 times).

3b) Working Group on Girls (WGG)

Created in 1995, the WGG now has more than 500 member organizations in almost 100 countries. The interest is generated through a common focus on improving girls’ rights

through diverse activities and programs in education, health and nutrition, which specifically target child labor and sexual exploitation (WGG 2010). WGG is one of the official “working groups” of the NGO committee of the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF). Continuously advocating for girls’ rights worldwide, WGG is also referred to as the *International Network for Girls* (INfG) (<http://www.girlsrights.org/about.html>). The WGG focuses its activities and programs on: 1) national governmental implementation, through policy statements, program development, and resource allocation for commitments to girls’ rights made through international agreements; 2) advocacy for the ongoing inclusion and development of girls’ rights in the work of the UN systems and structures as well as international agreements; and 3) promotion of girls’ active participation as agents of change in their own lives, families, communities and societies. WGG has created specific task forces that focus on: 1) girls’ participation within the UN; 2) advocating on behalf of and with the girl child; and 3) research and writing for the girl child’s inclusion in the UN.

Since the NGO itself focused on the girl child, coding for “girl” within the available PDF files at <http://www.girlsrights.org/> seemed to be counter-productive; rather, I coded for the main themes presented within the following three sets of documents, which revealed a focus on: advocacy, collaboration with the UN, distinctly discussing girls’ rights, education, gender equality, girl visibility, global campaigning, health, links with UN documents that focus on the girl child, MDGs, women’s rights, and violence.

- *Action for Girls Newsletters* -

There are 7 newspapers in total, each 4-6 pages in length available at <http://www.girlsrights.org/about.html>. I used the archived online newsletters available in 2008 (January and June); 2009 (March, July and December); 2010 (March and July).

- *Annual reports* -

Three annual reports are available through online archives in the form of “Slideshare.” I used the reports from:

2007-08 (30 slides) - http://www.girlsrights.org/report_2007-2008.html;

2008-09 (64 slides) - http://www.girlsrights.org/report_2008-2009.html;

and 2009-10 (82 slides) - http://www.girlsrights.org/report_2009-2010.html.

- *Fact Sheets on “the Situation of Girls”* -

In total there are 9 fact sheets (8 completed in 2006 and 1 completed in 2010), each two pages in length; all are available at http://www.girlsrights.org/fact_sheets.html listed in *Appendix C*.

3c) NGO for the Commission on the Status of Women (NGO-CSW)

As a functional commission of the *United Nations Economic and Social Council* (ECOSOC), CSW is dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women as the principal global policy-making body. Every year, representatives of Member States gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards, and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide (UN 2010). The CSW is responsible for the creation of four world conferences for women (Mexico City 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985, and Beijing 1995) and 3 conferences held at the UN headquarters in New York, U.S.A. (*Beijing +5* in 2000, *Beijing +10* in 2005 and *Beijing +15* in 2010). At these larger conferences NGOs play an active part in the UN dialogue. Since specific attention to the girl child was not formulated until the 1995 Beijing conference (through Beijing Strategic Section L), my analysis will span from 1995-2010.

I focus on the following statements published by NGOs:

- 9th session in 1995 -

Over 4,000 representatives of accredited NGOs were present

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/ngostatements.html>. From the list, I focus on the one NGO that specifically includes “girl” in the name of the organization: 1) The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

- 23rd session in 2000 -

A total of 2,052 NGO participants represented 1,038 NGOs, including 272 accredited NGOs (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/b5ngo.htm>). From the list, I focus on five NGOs that specifically have “girl” in the name of the organization: 1) World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (United Kingdom); 2) Girl Guide Association of Australia Incorporated (Australia); 3) National Network Against Girls’ Trafficking (Nepal); 4) Light and Hope Association for Blind Girls (Egypt); and 5) Girls International Forum for Tomorrow (United States of America).

- 49th session in 2005 -

Nearly 600 NGO organizations sent participants to the session, with over 2,700 NGO representatives (<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/>). I focus on two NGOs that specifically have “girl” in the name of the organization: 1) Girl Scouts of the United States of America; and 2) Girls’ International Forum for Tomorrow.

- 54th session in 2010 -

A total of 3,440 NGO representatives from 138 countries attended and represented 463 NGOs (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing15/documentation.html>). Of these, 425 were ECOSOC-accredited NGOs and 38 were NGOs that were accredited to the Fourth

World Conference on Women or to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. See *Appendix C* for the 39 NGOs who provided statements that, when searched through the online PDF archive, used “girl” at least once.

IV. Results

My research findings were gathered from the following three sets of documents: 1) annual reports from transnational organizations affiliated with the UN; 2) official UN documents; and 3) UN-sponsored NGOs. The findings will be collectively presented to demonstrate the use of framing tasks of Benford and Snow as a way of examining the development of girls’ rights within the UN (discussed in detail at the end of Chapter 2). Through the use of *diagnostic framing*, two recurring themes for girls’ rights became apparent: global inequality and gender discrimination. *Prognostic framing* revealed two additional themes--using specifically girls’ rights, and girls’ rights in relation to children’s rights--as key strategies for changing the problematic condition made evident through diagnostic framing. Finally, the utilization of *motivational framing* produced the themes of advocacy for girls’ rights, through support from the girl child and individual and institutional allies. The data is presented sequentially from 1995-2010.

1) Representations of Diagnostic Framing of Girls’ Rights

Framing the social conditions of the girl child demonstrated that there is in fact a *problematic condition in need of change* (Benford and Snow 2000). By paying attention to the larger social contexts in which the girl child lives, I am able to discuss the ways in which the UN constructs and ultimately defines girlhood as a problematic condition. If there is no understanding of a problematic condition, then a need for change does not exist. The social problems of the girl child are socially constructed through two themes I’ve identified: global

inequality and gender discrimination. The two are linked, as heightened global inequality exacerbates gender discrimination. But for the purposes of my research, I will be discussing the themes separately in order to look at the ways that the social conditions of the girl child and her girlhood become the basis for the argument for girls' rights.

1a) *Global Inequality*

In 1995, the formal discussion of girls' rights began with the statement that "the eradication of all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sex were priority objectives of the international community" (C-CRC paragraph 281). The discussion continued in the *Committee on the Rights of the Child* to note that "despite being recognized as a priority [within the UN], the place in society of girls, and women in general, raised serious and unresolved questions of inequality and indifference, manifested by discrimination, neglect, exploitation and violence" (C-CRC paragraph 281). Despite the planning of the commitment to the girl child on the fiftieth anniversary of the UN, the social realities of the girl child were inconsistent with the legislative commitment provided by the CRC. Large numbers of children, particularly girls, were "among the victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" (GA-Res. 156). The best interests of the girl child and respect for her views (two key principles of the CRC) were, in fact, being violated, due to global inequality. *The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women* (C-CEDAW) echoes this theme, stating that "economic necessity, the weight of tradition, early marriages and early pregnancies often force girls to drop out of school at higher rates than boys before they complete their first cycle of education" (paragraph 151).

The larger impact of global inequality becomes detrimental to the girl child in other ways as well: through "acts or threats of violence, whether occurring within the home or in

the community or perpetrated or condoned by the State, [that] instilled fear and insecurity in women's [and girls' lives] and were obstacles to the achievement of equality, development and peace" (GA-Res. 157). In order to have a world that is globally stable, the social issues of equality, development, and peace are central to this achievement.

In 2000, the same frame of global inequality is used to demonstrate how:

despite the progress made on many of the goals set at the 1990 World Summit for Children, this has been a decade of undeclared war on women, adolescents and children as poverty, conflict, chronic social instability and preventable diseases such as HIV/AIDS threaten their human rights and sabotage their development (UNICEF).

What the transnational organization of UNICEF describes above is the gap between the actual circumstances of the girl child and her rights afforded by the CRC. The structural conditions of the girl child are to blame for the disruption of her everyday life; in order for her life to change, the social problems and ultimately the social structure itself must change.

With the ever-increasing influence of economic globalization, the girl child is the one most significantly affected; her girlhoods are constructed in ways that constantly put her at real risk. As the UN directly discussed in 2007, "trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and sexual slavery increases the vulnerability of young women to HIV/AIDS infection and is linked to the widespread feminization of poverty, sex tourism, sweatshops and other detrimental consequences of globalization" (GA-Res. 126).

Not only do the social problems created by global inequality become a human rights issue, but also an issue of development. Plan (another transnational organization) describes the situation in a report published ten years after UNICEF's initial discussion:

the effects of poverty on under-five year olds are often irreversible. Hunger and disease can lead to the stunting of girls' physical and intellectual growth and last year [2009] the World Bank estimated that a further 30,000 to 50,000 infant deaths could be attributed to the economic crisis, to the poor getting poorer, and that of these most would be girls (Plan 2010).

In other words: “[i]t was the rich and powerful who made the commitment in 2000 [through the MDGs] but it is the poor and marginalised who bear the brunt of failure” (Plan 2010). In this discussion, over the course of ten years, Plan demonstrated that the girl child is at the center of global inequality, a theme echoed by UNICEF in 2010:

disparities in child protection are also apparent within countries and broadly correlate with the same causal factors as those for survival and development: region or continent, geographical location, ethnicity, disability, gender and income. For example, children from the poorest households are twice as likely to be unregistered at birth as those from the richest families. A girl from a rural household in the developing countries of Eastern and Southern Africa is twice as likely to be married before age 18 as her urban counterpart. Studies show that girls in rural areas are engaged in agricultural labour at an earlier age than boys, and they are more often abused and exploited (UNICEF 2010).

The NGO Asia Pacific Women’s Watch in its statement to the NGO-CSW in 2010 expands the discussion by directly connecting the government with global inequality, where:

[d]emocracies are in distress in many countries of the region, with systematic persecution of legitimate dissenters, human rights defenders and their families. Inter-State and intra-State armed conflicts are increasing, and prolonged political crises, religious extremism, fundamentalism and military dictatorships in some countries continue to create critical situations and insecurity for women and girls, including through the violation of their human rights. Women and girls constitute some 80 per cent of the world’s refugees and displaced persons, including internally displaced persons — their needs remain unaddressed.

The Coalition for Adolescent Girls (CAG) echoes the effect of the government on global inequality, adding the influence of the economy whereby:

employment of young women dominates in many of the industries most closely associated with globalization, including garment manufacturing and other light industry, and the service sector. With those opportunities, however, also lies the potential for exploitation; social dislocation and weakened traditional structures can bring major risks to the health and safety of girls and young women (2010).

If social conditions do not change, then the current situation of global inequality continues, in which:

[g]irls and young women suffer disproportionately in too many areas. Access to education and the quality of that education still has a significant gender bias. As food prices rise, hunger and poverty affect more people, with women and the young most at risk and girls the last priority. Climate change, lack of water and crises in fisheries and other natural resources destroy the future of girls and boys. Restrictive cultural practices limit girls' opportunities, constrain their role to that of caregiver and domestic helper and put them at risk of illness, neglect and violence (NGO-CSW 2010).

Overall, global inequality impacts every aspect of the life of a girl child. Whether decisions made directly or indirectly affect her life, she is caught in the middle of the successes or failures. The documents from my research revealed that no matter what social institution is involved in constructing the life of the girl child (such as the government, education or family), overall global inequality is what leads to her perpetually being "at risk," simply for being a girl.

1b) Gender Discrimination

The discrimination that affects the girl child is central to the social construction of her life since it shapes every aspect of her life, including the ways in which the local and global communities recognize her. The UN understood in 1995 that:

discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child was identified as a critical area of concern in the *Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women* in the achievement of equality, development and peace for women, and that the advancement and empowerment of women throughout their life-cycle must begin with the girl child (GA-Res 154).

By using a life-cycle approach we are able to pay attention to one of the biggest social problems affecting the girl child in all stages of her life: violence. In fact, her life is never really exempt from violence, since she is victimized even before birth. Pre-birth victimization does not by itself establish lifelong victimization, but if not identified as a social problem, then the violence will most likely manifest itself over time. For this reason,

in 1995 the UN officially named the various forms of violence against the girl child, including:

female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, rape, sexual abuse and harmful traditional or customary practices, including female genital mutilation, the root causes of son preference, marriages without free and full consent of the intending spouses, early marriages and forced sterilization (GA-Res 156).

One of the other social problems acknowledged early by the UN is healthcare, specifically the ways in which the girl child becomes “the victim of sexually transmitted diseases and increasingly of the human immunodeficiency virus, which have a serious impact on the quality of her life and leave her open to further discrimination” (GA-Res 157). The girl child’s personal health is another issue, as illustrated “by the increasing number of child-headed households, particularly orphan girls, including those orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic,” who now must find individual ways to cope, when the source of the health problem is more structural (GA-Res 157).

The life of the girl child also becomes disrupted by “situations of poverty, war and armed conflict, [where] girl children are among those most affected and potential for full development is thus limited” (GA-Res 157). The girl child is left with few social resources to deal with the discrimination created against her.

The various forms of gender discrimination are further discussed in UNICEF’s 2000 annual report, which states that the girl child is both directly and indirectly affected by discrimination, since:

to be a girl born into poverty is to endure discrimination many times over in pervasive and insidious patterns. From the moment of girls’ conception, their rights are in peril. There may be as many as 60 million ‘missing women’ in the world who, except for the gender discrimination that starts before they are born and continues throughout their lives, would be alive today.

What UNICEF describes are the ways in which sexism against the girl child begins even prior to her birth, and if she is ‘lucky’ to be born, then she continues to feel the sexism in a very systematic way. This is permitted to occur because “gender discrimination, [is] so entrenched in social norms as to escape notice, [it] keeps young girls from school and women from active and equal involvement in their communities” (UNICEF 2000). With the pervasiveness of sexism affecting not only her capacity to live, but also her access to basic rights, I argue that the girl child is constructed as someone in need of protection, as someone unable or incapable of being herself since she is defined by larger social institutions that in turn normalize her discrimination. This normalization of discrimination is the primary *problematic condition* on which girls’ rights becomes organized.

Since 1995, the social problems that were identified early in the discussion of girls’ rights have persisted and, in many cases, intensified, since “girls do not have the assets they need – the health, education, or skills – to thrive, and the effect of this failure will be felt by their children and their children’s children. Girls are doubly disadvantaged by both age and sex” (Plan 2010). CAG also makes the argument on the grounds of moral, ethical, and human rights, since “perhaps no other segment of society globally faces as much exploitation and injustice, and we owe girls our support as integral, yet overlooked, members of the human family” (2009). In 2000, the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDG) officially became part of the UN system to help reduce the impact of social problems affecting girl children. But even with this system in place, discrimination against the girl child persists, since the “tracking system ignores them, little data is collected and the particular impact of poverty on the lives of girls goes unrecognised and unrecorded” (Plan 2010).

Violence is another social problem that affects the girl child both directly and indirectly. WGG expands the original UN definition of violence to include:

infanticide; abuse in the home, both sexual and nonsexual; traditional practices such as female genital cutting [mutilation], stoning girls to death and other forms of ‘honor’ killings; child marriage of girls sometimes as young as two years old; and trafficking in which girls are stolen, sold or falsely persuaded to go with traffickers to become sex slaves in brothels away from home and often in other countries. While boys and girls can be forced to be child soldiers, girl soldiers are further abused by having to become “wives” to the combatants against their will (2009).

Recognizing the multiple ways in which the girl child is affected by violence fosters an understanding of how the UN identifies the social problems of the girl child and, in turn, seeks to integrate (or not) that social problem into the larger international dialogue.

Essentially, the discussion is one that relies on using Benford and Snow’s *diagnostic framing*, since the identification of a problematic condition is inseparable from the argument that the condition in fact needs to be changed.

As a social problem, health issues surrounding the girl child take multiple forms and are linked with other social institutions. More access to various forms of healthcare is needed to meet MDG 4 (child health) and to stop the unnecessary death and trauma affecting girl children (Plan 2010). One of the biggest continual health concerns affecting the girl child is early motherhood, because the health of the girl child becomes jeopardized when:

adolescent girls [do not] have access to information on the harm that early marriage and early pregnancy can cause, and those who become pregnant [do not] have access to health services that are sensitive to their rights and particular needs. States parties should take measures to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality in adolescent girls, particularly caused by early pregnancy and unsafe abortion practices, and to support adolescent parents. Young mothers, especially where support is lacking, may be prone to depression and anxiety, compromising their ability to care for their child (NGO-CRC 2003).

Another major health concern that still affects the girl child is HIV/AIDS, a factor that has actually increased since its original discussion within the UN in 1995. Adolescent

girls are around 2 to 4.5 times more likely to be living with HIV than their male counterparts, a number that continues to rise (UNICEF 2010). This becomes particularly dangerous for girl children in Eastern and Southern Africa who live in extreme poverty. The situation surrounding HIV/AIDS worsens as “girls who provide AIDS care are at an increased risk of contracting HIV, as they are often forced to drop out of school and, as a result, become more vulnerable to sexual exploitation and gender-based violence” and “children who lose their parents to AIDS suffer greater psychological distress than children who are orphaned by other causes” (WGG 2009).

The NGO International Planned Parenthood Federation connects the two health issues of motherhood and HIV/AIDS, since

to advance women’s and girls’ rights, achieve gender equity and ensure the rights of women and girls to the highest attainable standard of health, it is necessary to focus on young women’s sexual and reproductive rights. Pregnancy-related complications and the complications of unsafe abortion are the leading cause of death, for young women aged 15 to 19, worldwide. As Member States will acknowledge, young women are particularly vulnerable to early marriage, pregnancy-related complications, unsafe abortion, sexual violence and coercion, human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, the discontinuation of studies (often due to child marriage or adolescent pregnancy) and poverty (C-CSW 2010).

Education is another social issue that affects the life of the girl child, and one which the international community has focused, since it was considered to be the one social problem that could be more “easily” resolved than other social problems. Yet this has proved to be more difficult than presumed, since “obstacles for girls to realise their right to education are found on many levels. They include the higher status of sons in family hierarchies, customary practices such as child marriage, and an education system that does not accommodate young girls after marriage and childbirth (Plan 2010). Poverty directly affects a girl child’s ability to become educated where in the “poorest 20% of households, 39% of

girls are out of school” (Plan 2010). UNICEF illustrates the ways in which in poverty, geographical location, and gender affect educational opportunities:

in 2007, of the estimated 101 million children of appropriate age not attending primary school, the majority were girls. The largest gender gaps at the primary level are in West and Central Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia. Girls from poor and rural households are particularly at risk of missing out on primary and secondary education (2010).

With limited opportunities for education, girl children then have limited opportunities for other aspects of social life, such as involvement in political representation, employment that really offers economic sustainability, and overall increased feelings of self-value and self-worth.

Placing the girl child at the center of the discussion demonstrates a real investment (in all senses of the word) in creating gender equality. This becomes a particularly significant point for the girl child since

the exact start and end of adolescence are arbitrary, but adolescence is the time when puberty brings about physical changes, gender role definition is intensifying, and girls move from childhood to adult roles as wife, mother, worker, and citizen. During this period, health and social behaviors are established that have a lifetime of consequences (CAG 2009).

This realization, that the experiences of the girl child change as she ages, demonstrates how girlhoods are in fact a social construction, created not only by the girl herself, but also by society’s expectations of her. Even though the usage of the term *girl child* could presume a girl before the age of puberty, UN documents use the term to refer to girls from age 0-18.

Transnational organizations are really the ones responsible for using the differentiation of the language of “adolescence.” The distinction may occur within the transnational organizations but not directly within the UN for fear of the needs and experiences of adolescent girls only being handled within ‘youth’ discourses and not within ‘children’ discourses. There exist

youth constituencies within the UN, but there are no treaties (just like for the girl child) that address her specifically. Since adolescence can expand beyond the legal age protected by the CRC, the all-encompassing term “girl child” takes into consideration the multiple inequities perpetuated against her, both before and after puberty. Our understandings of the girl child become particularly important in articulating how her life experiences are framed as social problems, particularly within the areas of education, health, and violence.

Through specific naming of the *problematic condition in need of change*, applying Benford and Snow’s *diagnostic framing* becomes useful. The basic diagnosis, as demonstrated through the documents I analyzed, shows how the social conditions of the girl child are in fact problematic (visually represented in *Appendix D*). Over the past 15 years, the social problems of the girl child have in fact intensified. This is partially attributable to how we as a global community are paying more attention by documenting the social conditions of the girl child, primarily through the UN and its affiliated NGOs and transnational organizations. It can also be attributed to the fact that global inequality and gender discrimination are not being structurally addressed, but are rather considered personal troubles that can be “fixed” through individual work and reinvention of the self. However, taken collectively, the social inequalities based on gender and age impact not only serious aspects of the girl child’s life, specifically education, health and violence, but society as a whole. Therefore, I argue that her rights must be continuously advocated for, with the larger understanding that the social problems that affect the girl child provide the basic context and need for girls’ rights.

2) Representations of Prognostic Framing of Girls' Rights

Diagnosing a problem only begins a process of social transformation. Once a problem has been identified, specific lines of corrective action must be determined, as well as specific social actors to carry out those actions (Benford & Snow 2000). Identifying the ways in which rights are used through the UN provides an understanding of how the social conditions of the girl child can be linked to advocacy for girls' rights. In other words, identifying girls' rights becomes the main strategy within the UN to change the social conditions of global inequality and gender discrimination (as discussed through *diagnostic framing*).

When a nation ratifies a UN treaty that support the rights of women (through CEDAW) and children (through CRC) the standards established by the UN are supported through international law. Each nation is then charged with reporting back to the UN on the social conditions of the girl child through changes in national legislation, supported by changes in economic and judicial systems. For this reason, the discussion of the girl child at the UN level is framed exclusively in terms of rights, not policy actions. The UN does offer recommendations for ways a nation can improve equality for the girl child, but must wait until the next report filed by the nation to identify any changes made. Therefore, transnational organizations and NGOs affiliated with the UN exist to actively work with nations to ensure that what is legally possible becomes a reality for girl children around the world. For example, when educational parity between boy and girl children is supported by the CEDAW and CRC, the strategy of girls' rights becomes used by transnational organizations and NGOs to support and complement one another for the long-term goal of equality for the girl child. From various documents produced by organizations that are

affiliated with the UN, as well as those produced by the UN itself, my research revealed that discussion of girls' rights comes about in two specific ways: discussion distinctly of girls' rights, and of girls' rights in relation to children's rights.

2a) *Distinctly Girls' Rights*

With girls' rights official entry into the UN in 1995, the discussion began as:

[a]ddressing the questions of inequality and discrimination on the basis of gender did not imply that they had to be seen in a complete isolation, as if girls were a special group entitled to special rights. In fact, girls are simply human beings who should be seen as individuals and not just as daughters, sisters, wives or mothers, and who should fully enjoy the fundamental rights inherent to their human dignity. The rights of the girl should in no way be ignored or neglected, but rather promoted and protected (C-CRC paragraph 283).

By paying attention to the specific ways in which the girl child becomes identified, we are able to see that a direct reference to rights is part of that description. The advancement of the rights of the girl child becomes framed from a historical perspective; the UN reminds us that “within the larger movement for the realization of women's rights, history had clearly shown that it was essential to focus on the girl child in order to break down the cycle of harmful traditions and prejudices against women” (C-CRC paragraph 284). With this in mind, an advancement of the rights of the girl child also advances the rights of women, which is further framed through the UN's statement that “human rights of women and of the girl child were an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights; that they should form an integral part of the United Nations human rights activities and be regularly and systematically addressed” (C-CRC paragraph 281). This statement is constantly referenced in committee reports within the UN, serving as a reminder that girl children do, in fact, have rights, which are legally supported through international and national law.

Across the years discussion continually links the lives of the girl child and the adult woman, through specific mention of UN treaties where:

recognizing that the equal enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms will promote the realization of the rights of the child, bearing in mind the special needs of girls, and acknowledging the mutual reinforcement of the implementation of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (GA-Res 145).

Statements also indirectly reference UN treaties to make the argument that for “full gender equality, a human rights approach is also necessary, where at its centre [it] recognizes that the status of women and the extent to which they are able to exercise their rights is fundamental to the development of societies and is indispensable to the achievement of children’s rights and the girl child in particular” (NGO-WGG 2009). Finally, general statements are used to advocate for women’s rights by indirectly advocating for girls’ rights since:

empowering women and eliminating gender discrimination produces a double dividend – fulfilling the rights of women and also helping to save and improve the lives of children. Evidence shows that when women are educated and empowered to participate in decision-making in the household, workplace and political sphere – secure from violence, exploitation and discrimination – children and families benefit (UNICEF 2010).

Either through direct or indirect reference to UN treaties that support both the girl child and the adult woman, advocating for girls’ rights linked with women’s rights becomes a widely used strategy. Although it is understood (through a life-course perspective) that girls’ rights are on a continuum with women’s rights, the girl child is continuously not given her own place because adult women are still fighting for their respective place in the international community. The girl child is then left to defend herself without the full legal representation to do so. For this reason, the prevalence of this frame as a strategy for girls’ rights continues

to persist over time and in many ways relies on adultism to do so. The commonality of gender discrimination allows the two groups to be linked together in the first place, but it is not the only thing. In order to really pay attention to the social inequities both groups encounter, we must first sever the connection and discuss girls' rights as their own entity.

Specifically argued by the NGO-WGG in 2008 and again in 2009, the girl child must be separated from the adult woman since:

(1) the term "women" is not universally understood to include girls; (2) if girls are grouped with the general categories of "women" or "children," their particular needs are often overlooked; (3) the empowerment of girls [becomes of] concern to the CSW because they are included in the Beijing Platform for Action (Section L); and (4) concern for gender equality must include all females from the youngest girl to the oldest woman (2008).

More specifically, when the girl child does not become directly named then:

in only addressing women directly and the issue of girls peripherally, the CSW allows policies affecting girls to be strengthened only indirectly. The omission or indiscriminate use of "girls" throughout much of the document renders them invisible and may continue to marginalize them within the UN system. Girls' perspectives and experiences are essential to the effective design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of national economic policies, including national development. To the extent that they are able, girls have a right to participate in political, social, and economic decisions which affect themselves and their families; they can offer a new perspective to what they need in order to sustain their education, health, and security. The needs of girls must be identified as specific and different from those of women. One cannot assume that because a policy addresses women's equality that it will also address girls' equality (2009).

In other words, even though there are two distinct treaties within the UN that can cover the rights of the girl child, she is not clearly identified in either. To truly have a discussion of girls' rights, the girl child must have her own space within the global community. One way to achieve clarity is to specify between adult women and girl children in very purposeful ways. For example, many document statements use the phrase "women and girls" rather than solely "girls." The girl child is not the focus of the discussion, but rather she is "added" and

could even be considered in some cases as an afterthought. The girl child is unique in her age and gender social categories, and to deny this understanding is to deny the understanding of the categories themselves.

When the framing of girls' rights moves beyond a relational or separatist discussion with women's rights, we are reminded of how the multiple social problems that continuously affect the life of the girl child become framed as specific violations of human rights. For example, in 2003 one could find in UN documents statements such as, "bearing in mind that domestic violence against women and girls is a human rights issue" (GA-Res 147) or "to ensure that the education of the child is carried out and States parties develop and implement programmes for the education of the child in accordance with articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child" (GA-Res 157). These statements become part of naming the UN as both the creator and maintainer of girls' rights (key components to prognostic framing). In 2007, the UN specifically makes a statement about the consequences for girl children when their rights are violated, including:

less access for girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys, and in leaving them more vulnerable than boys to the consequences of unprotected and premature sexual relations and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence, abuse, rape, incest, honour-related crimes and harmful traditional practices, such as female infanticide, early marriage, forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation (GA-Res 140).

Continuing to identify specific social problems as violations of girls' rights, transnational organizations and NGOs also have entered the discussion. In a general sense, "in a new global economy girls and young women are no longer as sheltered by their parents and communities, but they also are not armed with education or understanding of their own rights to protect themselves in the world" (CAG 2009). Therefore, even though

girls and boys have the same entitlements to human rights, they face different challenges in accessing them. Girls are less likely to be enrolled in school, have less access to medical care, and are more likely to be deprived of food. They experience more violence and sexual harassment and are expected to work hard on domestic chores limiting their ability to develop their intellectual potential. This lack of opportunity and care is unfair and unjust (Plan 2010).

Highlighting specific violations of rights can also be discussed in terms of health:

the Committee [on the Rights of the Child] is concerned that early marriage and pregnancy are significant factors in health problems related to sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS. Both the legal minimum age and actual age of marriage, particularly for girls, are still very low in several States parties. Girls are often obliged to leave the education system and are marginalized from social activities. Further, in some States parties married children are legally considered adults, even if they are under 18, depriving them of all the special protection measures they are entitled under the Convention. The Committee strongly recommends that States parties review and, where necessary, reform their legislation and practice to increase the minimum age for marriage with and without parental consent to 18 years, for both girls and boys. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has made a similar recommendation (general comment No. 21 of 1994) (NGO-CRC 2003).

And in terms of violence:

girls and boys who end up on the street lose all the things that make a home – home. But for girls, it's even worse. Why? Because on the streets they are more in danger of sexual violence and abuse from boys and older men (PLAN 2010).

By linking girl's rights with specific treaties within the UN system and specific social problems that affect her life, the key components of *prognostic framing* become exposed, where the girl child is discriminated against because she doesn't have rights, and global inequality and discrimination keep the girl child from accessing her rights in the first place. Supported directly by CAG, "as the world seeks to fight poverty and respect fundamental human rights, girls remain nearly invisible to those in positions of power—and yet it is only through major and sustained improvements in the condition of girls that the world will reach its goals" (2009). More specifically, when we fail to advance girls' rights we see the direct impact it has not only on her rights, but on society itself. As NGO-WGG reminds us:

girls are disproportionately affected by the failure of the international community to meet health care commitments; the social stigma of HIV/AIDS further magnifies the low status for girl caregivers. The State has a major role to play in protecting everyone's human rights. The human rights of the girl child cannot and should not be overlooked in the development of a healthy society (2009).

2b) *Girls' rights in relation to children's rights*

In the overall discussion of girls' rights, if girls' rights are not identified as their own entity, then they are framed in relation to women's rights (as discussed in part 2a) or in relation to children's rights, generally conceived as boys' rights. In fact, girls' rights are not just for girl children, but for boy children, adult women, adult men -- in short, girls' rights are for everybody! This strategy is one that is not maintained within official UN documents, but within transnational organizations and NGOs. Being framed in terms of gender equality, girls' rights are:

of course, not "just about girls." Gender equality is an issue of social justice and human rights that needs to be pursued by all members in a community or society, male or female. But if our work in promoting gender equality is to show any impact, it has to be in terms of changing the lives of girls in our partner communities...since we know that investing in girls and young women has a disproportionately beneficial effect on alleviating poverty; not only for the girls themselves but for their families, their communities and their country. Everyone benefits, including boys and men (Plan 2010).

There is the larger societal understanding that in order to change the social conditions of the girl child, all members of society must be involved. This strategy can be categorized as both part of the "plan of attack" (*prognostic framing*), but also is an example of a "call to arms" (*motivational framing*). More specifically:

participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination, and encourage opportunities for marginalized children, including both girls and boys, to be involved. Children are not a homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds. Programmes also need to ensure that they are culturally sensitive to children from all communities (NGO-CRC 2009).

In other words, even though we are able to recognize the ways that children--girl children and boy children--are not a homogenous group, we must still treat them the same, in the name of gender equality. Otherwise, the perception is that singling out the girl child would be discriminatory.

Using an analysis that is both age- and gender-oriented allows for gender equality in relation to girls' rights to be discussed in terms of education, health, and violence. In terms of education:

girl-friendly = child-friendly; one prime gauge of educational quality is how narrow the classroom gender gap is. A school is truly child-friendly when both girls and boys find it a safe, welcoming and healthful environment, centered on the rights of the child, where teachers demonstrate respect for those rights and where students discover that education is not only relevant to their lives but also a source of joy (UNICEF 2000).

In terms of health:

Of particular concern is gender-based discrimination combined with taboos or negative or judgmental attitudes to sexual activity of girls, often limiting their access to preventive measures and other services. Of concern also is discrimination based on sexual orientation. In the design of HIV/AIDS-related strategies, and in keeping with their obligations under the Convention, States parties must give careful consideration to prescribed gender norms within their societies with a view to eliminating gender-based discrimination as these norms impact on the vulnerability of both girls and boys to HIV/AIDS. States parties should, in particular, recognize that discrimination in the context of HIV/AIDS often impacts girls more severely than boys (NGO-CRC 2003).

and in terms of violence:

at a universal level all children aged 0-18 years are considered vulnerable until the completion of their neural, psychological, social and physical growth and development. Babies and young children are at higher risk due to the immaturity of their developing brain and their complete dependency on adults. Both girls and boys are at risk of all forms of violence, but violence often has a gender component. For example, girls may experience more sexual violence at home than boys whereas boys may be more likely to encounter--and experience violence within--the criminal justice system (NGO-CRC 2010).

Taken together, advocating for access to education, improved health, and decreased violence are social issues that affect all children. Therefore, improving the situations for girl children indirectly improves the situations of boy children, and improving the situations of the boy child indirectly improves the situation of girl children. There is no specific political motivation discussed for taking this approach, but I would argue that since it is a strategy used primarily by NGOs and transnational organizations affiliated with the UN, that appealing to a broader base of constituencies becomes important for organizational survival (an important aspect of prognostic framing).

As Plan reminds us, “the more we talk about the issues affecting girls, the harder it becomes for people to ignore them!” (2010). This is what makes Benford and Snow’s prognostic framing crucial to understanding how girls’ rights are identified within the UN and visually represented in *Appendix E*. Naming *who/what is responsible for changing the problematic condition* becomes particularly important when trying to argue that girls’ rights should have their own place within the UN, not in connection with children’s rights or women’s rights, but distinctly as girls’ rights. But the ambiguity of this strategy is also part of the international discourse, where girls’ rights is linked to everyone else’s well-being. Therefore, the dialogue becomes complicated when naming the *problematic condition in need of change* with sub-strategies in its “plan of attack.” Whichever strategy becomes employed, it is only by paying attention to girls’ rights that will we even begin to dismantle the discriminatory cycles that violate the basic rights of the girl child. This becomes the basis for the possibility of change and serves as the final “call to arms.”

3) Representations of Motivational Framing of Girls' Rights

Motivational framing becomes the final framing task, since the social problem is already identified through diagnostic framing and its development is traced through prognostic framing. The various social problems affecting the girl child provide the *vocabularies of motive* since they serve as the basis of rights violations. The strategy is then to enact girls' rights - as distinct girls' rights, as girls' rights in connection with women's rights, or as girls' rights in relation to children's rights. In the documents I analyzed, girls' rights are fostered through acknowledgment of the girl child in her own lived experiences and advocacy for girls' rights is represented through individual and institutional support. These two aspects of motivational framing become the basis of *identifying ways that change can be enacted*.

3a) Agency for the girl child

To ensure that girls' rights would become part of a human rights movement dedicated to the girl child, the UN declared in 1995 that:

[o]nly through a comprehensive strategy to promote and protect the rights of girls, starting with the younger generation, would it be possible to build a shared and lasting approach and a wide movement of advocacy and awareness aimed at promoting the self-esteem of women and allowing for the acquisition of skills which will prepare them to participate actively in decisions and activities affecting them. Such an approach must be based on the recognition of human rights as a universal and unquestionable reality, free from gender bias (C-CRC).

Through the above statement, the promotion of girls' rights is understood as the basis for a "wide movement of advocacy and awareness" in which the girl child becomes the center of the movement. In 2003, the UN becomes more specific in the involvement of the girl child herself, where:

Only through the active involvement of girls, who are at the root of the life cycle, would it be possible to initiate a movement for change and betterment. In fact, if the

Platform for Action was to be an agenda for change and advancement of women, it could only be meaningful if it placed the human rights of girls at its core (GA-Res 145).

For sustainable change, multiple organizations also support direct involvement of the girl child in a discussion of girls' rights. This specific tactic can be identified as part of a "plan to attack" and a "call to arms" and therefore relies on the use of both prognostic and motivational framing. Specifically in 2009, CAG recommended that "service delivery organizations should seek women's and girls' input from the early stages, while advocacy organizations should help adolescent girls speak out to decision-makers on their own behalf." The International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary NGO advocated in their statement to the NGO-CSW in 2010 that knowledge is power, so that in "order to remove impediments and to enable the active participation of women and girls in decisions that affect their lives, they need to have legal knowledge and inclusion in participatory structures to ensure that they are able to exercise their rights and responsibilities." In fact, through the *NGO-Commission on the Status of Women*, the NGO's support for the involvement of the girl child in advocating for girls' rights has increased over the years, despite the differences that exist in geographical regions, girl-centered or women/girl centered organizational focus, or religious/non-religious affiliations.

Another part of creating agency for the girl child lies in her physical presence at various UN meetings. This involvement of the girl child is a more hands-on approach and is largely advocated for by NGOs affiliated with the UN. The work from NGO-WGG in 2007 demonstrates how:

over 200 NGO girl delegates under the age of 18 attended the CSW51 as highly visible and active participants and advocated for girls. Many went home with defined projects to engage their communities. This year [2008], the WGG hopes to attract many girls to its events. Throughout CSW 51, girls stated that they did not want to be

seen as a ‘theme’, but rather as integral and equal participants in the conversations and decisions that affect their lives (2008).

Not only does the NGO realize the impact of the presence of the girl child on UN delegates at the annual UN meetings, but girl children realize it themselves. This approach to advocacy is a direct application of creating agency. Using this tactic relies on the strategy as described in *prognostic framing* (see Section 2b) of distinctly girls’ rights and is therefore met with more resistance from the international community. To offset the resistance, I argue that key advocates of girls’ rights must be created through additional individual and institutional support so that the movement has a sustainable “call to arms.”

3b) *Agency of the girl child through individual and institutional support*

From the beginning of the girls’ rights discussion in the UN (1995), there was a broader understanding that the girl child could not complete the journey for girls’ rights alone, for

although the eradication of prevailing mental and social attitudes will mainly be achieved through advocacy, information and education, legislation will play a decisive role. In fact, legislative measures send a formal message that traditions and customs contrary to the rights of the child will no longer be accepted, create a meaningful deterrent and clearly contribute to changing attitudes (C-CRC).

Therefore, girls’ rights need not only societal support with the transformation in how the society itself views and therefore treats the girl child, but also larger structural support (in the form of the government and the legal system). For this reason alone, the CRC continues to be the UN document that is used for international advocacy for girls’ rights.

Early in the discussion of *how change can be enacted* in 2003, the UN not only “calls upon States [but] international organizations as well as non-governmental organizations to help mobilize the necessary financial resources and political support to achieve goals, strategies and actions relating to the survival, development and protection of the girl child in

all programmes for children” (GA-Res 154). The discussion over the years includes the same key advocates to demonstrate how this tactic can also be considered as part of the necessary “plan of attack” (*prognostic framing*) to enable girls’ rights. In 2007, the UN expanded the list of key advocates and their activities by focusing on:

civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and full respect for and the enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of age-appropriate and gender-sensitive information material on those rights to all sectors of society, in particular to children (GA-Res 140).

Transnational organizations and NGOs agree with the UN that key advocates for girls’ rights should represent from all aspects of society to offer a sustainable “plan of attack” (*prognostic framing*) in arguing for girls’ rights (*motivational framing*) since,

by virtue of their age and social position, girls’ opportunities and prospects are fundamentally shaped by those closest to them, particularly family members - mothers, fathers and other male relatives, mothers-in-law, and husbands. But the actions within the often-hidden domestic circle are affected by the policies and resource allocation of national and local governments and donor agencies as well as by civil society and the private sector (CAG 2009).

NGO-WGG specifically calls for collective participation by “creating strategic partnerships and alliances and merging overlapping agendas. The journey should be taken collectively in order to create positive changes in the lives of women, men, girls, and boys all over the world” (2008). Plan specifically includes “adult leaders from multiple social institutions including parents, teachers, community and religious leaders, civil society organizations, government institutions, policy makers, the judicial system, the media, and the private sectors to advocate for girls’ rights” (2010). The collaborative process is necessary since “most initiatives work at multiple levels, in partnership and with the participation of several categories of duty bearers” where duty-bearers “the persons, organisations and institutions whose duty it is to assure that girls are able to realise their rights” (Plan 2010).

Collectively, all girls' rights organizations that either work directly with or are affiliated with the UN, call for the improvement of institutional support for girls' rights (visually represented in *Appendix F*). Therefore, the tactics employed could be classified as both prognostic and motivational. Plan argues for direct governmental support, since:

government authorities are openly committed to the protection of girls from violence and harm; Governments have adopted legislation and committed resources to support girls' rights; Support services to protect girls and their rights are strengthened; Women and girls have more space to participate in decision-making; Partnerships and alliances are created to promote gender equality and to improve the lives of girls (2010).

The NGO-CRC also understands the significance of governmental support, specifically advocating for international governmental support, because

governments have a major responsibility to initiate a change of behaviors and attitudes. This change can be brought about through government subsidies, education and public awareness. Partnerships with civil society and the participation of girls still remain key elements in mobilizing changes that will benefit today's girls who are tomorrow's women (2008).

CAG argues for a better understanding of girls' rights through a focus on the social institutions of health and education:

The cycle of neglect of girls' rights, poor health and education indicators, meager economic options, and the generation-to-generation transmission of poverty can be broken by focused investments in girl-directed policies and programs that meet girls' needs. The international community has focused heavily on expanding access to primary education for girls, and though important, primary education is by no means enough. The benefit of education will not materialize without the possibility of attending secondary school, and schools at all levels must provide a quality education that not only prepares but also respects, empowers, and protects girls (2009).

and lastly, NGO-WGG explains that the UN itself can be a space where girls' rights receives its biggest advocate, since

UNICEF is working with other agencies to enhance children's rights and women's rights by strengthening knowledge and understanding of the UN and its partners concerning conceptual and practical links and tensions between women's and children's rights, as well as reinforcing complementarities between the CRC and CEDAW. It is also trying to strengthen advocacy efforts to promote the interconnectedness and simultaneous realization of the rights of women and children

through the work of the CRC and CEDAW Committees as a framework to influence action at the national level (2009).

In the end, “reports do not change the world, but champions can. The next step must be to find and support courageous and visionary leaders” (CAG 2009).

Through my research, the collective use of multiple UN documents, all directly connected or affiliated with the UN, represented how girls’ rights was part of the international dialogue from 1995-2010. Over the course of fifteen years, the *problematic condition in need of change* (diagnostic framing) has intensified, partially due to the fact that as a global community we are paying more attention by documenting the social conditions of the girl child and partly because the causes of the social problems of global inequality and gender discrimination are not being structurally addressed. For this reason, the UN as the main international actor for the creator and maintainer of girl’s rights helps to frame *who/what is responsible for the problematic condition* (prognostic framing). By specifically focusing on the development of girls’ rights, the deplorable social conditions and multiple injustices girl children encounter become framed as violations of their rights, housed within the UN. The violations occur solely on the basis of being a girl child, and for that reason alone girls’ rights need to have their own location within the human rights. Moving the ideas forward to create a frame of how *change can be enacted* (motivational framing) relies on the inclusion of the girl child herself and key advocates both individually and institutionally. Including both are vital to the sustainability of girls’ rights that not only frame the girl as central to the discussion, but actually involve her in the process.

V. Discussion of Findings

Using content analysis, my research analyzed three sets of documents guided by the sociological subfields of Children/Youth and Human Rights. With a feminist, human rights analysis, I was able to analyze the use of framing processes to center the girl child in the international discussion. The results demonstrated how all three framing tasks (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational) became essential to locating the placement of girls' rights within the UN. I argue that the UN's central location for advocacy for girls' rights provided the space (in all senses of the word) within the international community to see the ways in which girls' rights and ultimately the life of the girl child are socially constructed. Global inequality and gender discrimination created the basis for understanding the *problematic condition in need of change*. The social problems of the girl child became particularly framed in the areas of education, health, and violence. As a way to connect the disparate social conditions as a violation of rights afforded the girl child through the CRC, promoting girls' rights *became the strategy* to advocate for the girl child within the international community. This strategy was used by multiple components of the UN to specifically argue for: 1) girls' rights; 2) girls' rights in connection with women's rights; and 3) girls' rights in relation to children's rights. Whichever sub-strategy is used, in order for girls' rights to be a sustainable movement, the girl child, individuals and social institutions all need to be part of the *ways in which change can be enacted*.

The social constructions of girlhoods and the girl child as a social actor are two key concepts specifically supported by the "new" sociology of childhood. Within *diagnostic framing*, girlhoods are socially constructed through two distinct, yet related, social systems of global inequality and gender discrimination. Both systems utilize the girl child to fulfill their

structural needs, not particularly caring where she ends up in the process. For this reason, *motivational framing* is useful to remind society that the girl child is a social actor, one who is not always the victim of crisis, but one with opportunity and choice. These two frames create two opposing narratives of the girl child, where she is seen as having to choose between being a “can-do” girl who embraces girl power or an “at-risk” girl who is characterized by life’s difficulties (ie. early motherhood, incarceration, or school-dropout) (Harris 2004). The documents I analyzed represent the contradiction that envelops the girl child, requiring the UN to construct girls’ rights in a way that utilizes both narratives in order to avoid further marginalization of the girl child in the social world.

The key social issues that structured the life of the girl child in 1995 and called for her official entry into UN discourse are still key issues that affect her life today. Not necessarily bounded by geographical location, the girl child systematically feels the multiple forms of injustices that are committed against her. Through global inequality, the “economic necessity” of social issues (other than the girl child) becomes a state’s top priority. The girl child is left with few resources to survive, since there is very little money available from the state to provide her with the social services that she requires and legally has a right to. One of the most direct social effects of global inequality is poverty. When a girl child is born into poverty, raised in poverty and develops into an impoverished adult, the possibilities of personal and social sustainability are difficult to achieve. With an ever-increasing globalized economy, if a girl child is able to find work, it will most likely be at the expense of her education or her family (by birth or by marriage) or both. The narrative for her to have a fully sustaining life becomes limited unless her social conditions become identified as violations of her rights.

As evidenced by the various reports from both the transnational organizations and NGOs affiliated with the UN, if a nation is not even recording the birth of its girl children (as directly stated in the scholarly work of Sohoni in 1995), then there becomes no need to economically provide for her, since she doesn't officially exist. As a result, issues of displacement or increased ill-health (due to hunger, HIV/AIDS or climate changes) are not given as much attention by the state, but are given attention by organizations outside of the state. The impact of heightened global inequality is also felt in terms of violence. As a social problem that affects a girl child across her life course (as evidenced by increase in the types of violence that we now identify as affecting the girl child) it becomes normalized on the basis of gender discrimination.

The continuous discrimination against a girl child, in all aspects of her life, her girlhood and the way she experiences her life will affect her across her life course. If we analyze girlhood as something that is socially constructed, we can move beyond the common usage of girlhood as one stage of life, biologically defined and psychologically determined. If a girl child is able to survive birth, her life will continuously be challenged in direct and indirect ways through multiple forms of discrimination until she dies. This point is supported by the work of childhood studies scholar Barry Mayall (2002), who argues that children must be viewed as a social group and childhood as a social phenomena. As revealed through the documents I analyzed, over the years the definitions of violence against the girl child became more detailed, early marriages and young motherhood continued, HIV/AIDS rates actually increased and formal primary education is still not available to all girl children. The social problems of the girl child demonstrate that the girl child is not the cause of the problem, but rather society has created the problems, with the girl child caught in the middle of multiple

systems of oppression. The systemic formation of discrimination allows the social problems of girl children to be discussed collectively while providing opportunities to see how the system itself could change. Change in the system can occur only if the girl child is truly seen and respected as a social actor (best represented through motivational framing).

Advocating for the girl child is represented through acknowledgment of the girl child in her own lived experiences by direct involvement of the girl child herself in an organizational capacity and through adult allies represented both at the individual and institutional level. The documents that expressed the involvement of the girl child came from the organizations that represented the girl child, rather than the UN itself. This underscores the significance of organizational support with a focus on social networks, local identity, attitudes to institutions and facilities in the community, and community and civic engagement (Morrow 2006). The UN supported the ways in which the girl child becomes the center of the movement for girls' rights, but did not provide the avenues for agency of the girl child herself. The documents I analyzed described how the best form of agency within the UN would be equal representation at annual meetings, active participation in meetings, and continuous inclusion in the agenda of the UN, not just for certain sessions that focus on children/youth or women/children.

To ensure that the UN continues to recognize the girl child, she must be included along with adult advocates in the forms of political, civil, and private society involvement. As argued by transnational organizations and UN-affiliated NGOs, a concerted effort must be made to view the girl child as an equal partner, to consider her an equal contributor to the discussion. This viewpoint becomes particularly important in order to avoid the adultism of past social movements that centered on children. It will also create real opportunities for

sustainable projects that truly focus on the unequal social conditions of the girl child and support her need for rights (as supported by the sociology of human rights). As shown by the documents I analyzed, collective participation is what will truly offer sustainable change in the life of the girl child. The UN, transnational organizations and UN-affiliated NGOs all supported this point. The girl child is central to the success of collective participation, along with her family, her peers, her government, her religion, the economy, the educational system, the health care system, the judicial system and most importantly the international community. When social service programs are created to truly address the social conditions of the girl child as systemic social problems, then change is possible. Through concerted efforts by various social institutions, those that directly deal with the girl child (ie. family) and those more abstract (ie. judicial system), will be able to use a framework that centers girls' rights, thereby centering the girl child herself in the international community.

Moving forward with the possibilities of change comes from the understanding that the social conditions of the girl child are ones worth changing and in need of change, because the social conditions are really social problems, and they are violations of the rights of the girl child as afforded by her nation with ratification of the CRC (diagnostic framing). From the documents I analyzed, the discussion surrounding the topic of girls' rights continues in relation to women's rights (as supported by the work of Orloff and Gruskin&Plfker) and as separation from children's rights (as supported by the work of Croll and Taefi), but not really from parent's rights (as supported by the work of Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandeveldel). From the documents, the largest support was for separation of girls' rights from children's rights, so that the girl child is able to have her own place within the discourse of human rights within the UN (the key example of prognostic framing). The UN in many

ways supports the use of girls' rights since it agrees that "rights are important because those who have them can exercise agency. Agents are decision-makers. As agents, right-bearers can participate" and "rights are also an important advocacy tool, a weapon which can be employed in the battle to secure recognition" (Freeman 2007). This understanding of rights illustrates how the social construction of the girl child and the girl child as a social actor create meaning; this meaning-making is central to understanding the three framing processes that contribute to the fight for girls' rights -- diagnostic, prognostic and motivational.

Focusing solely on the girl child offers the opportunity to explore her rights where we "first de-link women's rights from those of the girl child; and later on re-establish a link between the disadvantaged position of girl children and of adult women. If positive attitudes towards the girl child are developed this will lead in the long term to positive attitudes towards adult women" (Kabeberi-Macharia 1998:51). This de-linking is what is slowly happening within the UN due to the increasing pressure from transnational organizations and UN affiliated NGO who provide social services for the girl child and directly see the ways in which her life is impacted on a daily basis due to gender and age discrimination.

The documents from my research also demonstrate how the global children's rights industry (as supported by the work of Reynaert, Bouverne-De Bie and Vandevælde) exists through the persistence of the UN (in various capacities) in including the girl child in the usage of a human rights framework. This use of framing becomes essential to linking the social conditions of the girl child with her rights as a girl. Yet, it also becomes incorrectly used by development agencies without real commitment to the rights of the girl child, brought to our attention by the transnational organization of Coalition of Adolescent Girls who state that:

in contrast to the politically attractive focus on young children, dealing with adolescence requires attending to sexuality, gender roles, and parental dominion. Paradoxically, many development agencies prominently feature girls and young women in promotional materials as the appealing face of those who benefit from “good works,” but serious and sustained efforts to improve the condition of girls are largely absent (2009).

This concern is not only voiced by the transnational organizations who represent the girl child in the international community but also by scholars as well (particularly Mitlin and Hickey). As global inequality increases, as more states are going to have fewer and fewer resources to provide for their population of girl children, additional funding is going to need to be provided by the private sector. Being aware of the potential consequences this may produce is important to ensure that the girl child will not continuously be discriminated against.

Study Strengths

1. Contemporary social relevancy of girls’ rights

With the rise in the interdisciplinary field of girls studies, and less (albeit continual) marginalization of the subfields of children/youth and human rights/children’s rights within sociology, my research offers further insight into the contemporary relevancy of girls’ rights. Understanding the ways in which girlhoods are socially constructed allows for the larger argument that inadequate social conditions provide the basis for articulating girls’ rights. Therefore, the focus becomes one on social problems affecting the girl child (such as education, health and violence) and not solely on specific documents or articles of key UN Conventions (as done in previous research).

2. Use of feminist human rights analysis

My methodological use of content analysis is supported to help better understand the current relationships of gender with power by providing historical documentation from 1995-2010 of the underrepresentation of the girl child in the UN (Reinharz 1992). Maintaining the girl child as central to the analysis allowed the documents to emerge with their own patterns (rather than my own predetermined patterns) and in turn provide a sequential time representation of the key themes representative of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing. Using a feminist human rights statement and applying it to girls' rights, the relevancy of framing to girls' rights allows us to support how:

[i]n order to respond to the brutal and systematic violation of [girl children] globally, governments and the human rights community must move beyond male defined norms, a move that requires examining gender biases and acknowledging [girls' rights]. Governments must seek to end the politically and culturally constructed wars on [girl children], rather than continuing to perpetuate them" (Bunch 1995:15).

Study Limitations

1. Use of documents

With content analysis, my data was limited to what was available within the UN archives. While I do not feel that the data itself was limiting, the information available online did change over the course of my dissertation, where documents were added, deleted or websites changed altogether (thus beginning a new search). Another disadvantage through the use of documents is that, "the existence of a community is often invisible to us," whereby secondary sources end up representing a community for better or for worse (Smith 1996: 58). In other words, my analysis of the representation of girls' rights within the UN was through what the members of various organizations and what members of the UN system felt was important; to what extent this process was amicable or contentious is "invisible to

me’.” For future research, it would be interesting to try and get at the process of representation by looking specifically at “problem countries” (as identified by the UN) and see the ways in which the discourse surrounding girls’ rights has changed over time in comparison to ‘successful countries’.

2. Resource constraints

My resources (in terms of time, finances and travel) confined my work within documents available online. For future research on girls’ rights, it would be ideal to be on a related project in the UN to make a physical connection with the material and be part of the community that is “invisible to me.”

Also, ideally involving girl children in the research process “tackles the oppressions of adultism by challenging the wider structural inequalities that young people face in society, and demonstrates their ability to participate” (Kirby 12: 2002). For future research on girls’ rights, it would be ideal to involve direct involvement with girl children, either as representatives within the UN system or as parts of their local community.

Beyond gender and age, it would also be beneficial to focus future research on other specific social categories, such as race/ethnicity, religion, mother/care-provider, or worker, to further enhance the discussion of the social construction of the girl child within the UN.

VI. Conclusion

Combining the sociological subfields of children/youth and human rights with a feminist human rights analysis allows for the most cohesive discussion of the United Nations in framing girls’ rights within the international dialogue. By using the “*new*” *sociology of childhood*, the girl child can be considered a social actor and girlhood as a social construction. Within the *sociology of human rights*, arguing for the girl child to distinctly

have a location within the human rights movements provides her a legitimate space to participate in, advocate for, and find recognition for her rights. Using a *feminist human rights analysis* in both subfields allows me to make the *invisible visible* by drawing attention to the presence of the girl child within the UN; *bring the margin to the center* by arguing for girls' rights as its own entity; *render the apparently 'trivial' important* by describing how the social conditions of the girl child are direct violations of her rights; identify the girl child as a competent actor; and understand girl children as *subjects in their own right* (Reinharz 1992). In both subfields, the girl child exists in the fringes; framing girls' rights within the UN, allows her to have a "solid" place in both.

Using content analysis with the following sets of documents from 1995-2010: 1) *annual reports from transnational organizations affiliated with the UN* (United Nations Children's Fund, Plan International and Coalition for Adolescent Girls); 2) *official UN documents* (the Third General Assembly, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child); and 3) *documents from UN sponsored Non-Governmental Organizations* (the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Working Group on Girls, and the Commission on the Status of Women), the inadequate social conditions of the girl child became the basis for girls' rights.

Collectively, the documents were organized to characterize the development of girls' rights within the UN through the process of framing. More specifically, through *diagnostic framing* the social problems of the girl child became constructed in terms of global inequality and gender discrimination. The violations of human rights against the girl child that result from the social problems she experiences, become the basis for *prognostic framing*. Girls' rights are discussed within the UN as uniquely girls' rights or in relation to children's rights.

With the understanding that the social conditions of the girl child need to change to secure a sustainable girls' rights movement, *motivational framing* is then utilized. It is through agency for the girl child in her own lived experiences and through advocacy from various forms of individual and institutional support, that girls' rights can be advanced to have her own space within the international dialogue; one not situated within women's rights nor children's rights, but girls' rights.

The incorporation of the girl child into UN discussions demonstrated the ways that girls' rights are becoming part of "formal" international dialogue with an understanding of the social categories of age and gender. My dissertation offers a primarily substantive contribution to sociology to demonstrate the ways in which girls' rights in the UN became socially constructed by looking at multiple components of the UN, rather than just one specific document, or specific articles of Conventions, or the inclusion of the girl child in one specific nation. By looking into how the UN has framed girls' rights in the UN over the past 15 years, girls' rights will only continue to have significance within the UN and the international community. Being aware of the girl child and girls' rights ensures that both individually and as a society we do not ignore the social conditions and social inequalities of the girl child; for if ignored, the bondage of girl children will continue in more covert ways and we as a society will ultimately fail in securing the due rights of girls everywhere.

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APPENDIX A

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989

entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49

Preamble

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Recognizing that the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,

Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,

Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity,

Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social

and Cultural Rights (in particular in article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth",

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) ; and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict, Recognizing that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and that such children need special consideration,

Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child, Recognizing the importance of international cooperation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries,

Have agreed as follows:

PART I

Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Article 2

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Article 3

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.
3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the

care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

Article 4

States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation.

Article 5

States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 6

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.
2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Article 7

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.
2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.

Article 8

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.
2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity.

Article 9

1. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. Such determination may be necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse or neglect of the child by the parents, or one where the parents are living

separately and a decision must be made as to the child's place of residence.

2. In any proceedings pursuant to paragraph 1 of the present article, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known.

3. States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests.

4. Where such separation results from any action initiated by a State Party, such as the detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the State) of one or both parents or of the child, that State Party shall, upon request, provide the parents, the child or, if appropriate, another member of the family with the essential information concerning the whereabouts of the absent member(s) of the family unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall of itself entail no adverse consequences for the person(s) concerned.

Article 10

1. In accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunification shall be dealt with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall entail no adverse consequences for the applicants and for the members of their family.

2. A child whose parents reside in different States shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis, save in exceptional circumstances personal relations and direct contacts with both parents. Towards that end and in accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, States Parties shall respect the right of the child and his or her parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country. The right to leave any country shall be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and which are necessary to protect the national security, public order (*ordre public*), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 11

1. States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.

2. To this end, States Parties shall promote the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements or accession to existing agreements.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
 - (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 15

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.
2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 16

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.
2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 17

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

To this end, States Parties shall:

- (a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;
- (b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;
- (c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;

- (d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;
- (e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

Article 18

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.
2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

Article 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.
2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Article 20

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.
2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.
3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

Article 21

States Parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:

- (a) Ensure that the adoption of a child is authorized only by competent authorities who determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures and on the basis of all pertinent

and reliable information, that the adoption is permissible in view of the child's status concerning parents, relatives and legal guardians and that, if required, the persons concerned have given their informed consent to the adoption on the basis of such counselling as may be necessary;

(b) Recognize that inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child's care, if the child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner be cared for in the child's country of origin;

(c) Ensure that the child concerned by inter-country adoption enjoys safeguards and standards equivalent to those existing in the case of national adoption;

(d) Take all appropriate measures to ensure that, in inter-country adoption, the placement does not result in improper financial gain for those involved in it;

(e) Promote, where appropriate, the objectives of the present article by concluding bilateral or multilateral arrangements or agreements, and endeavour, within this framework, to ensure that the placement of the child in another country is carried out by competent authorities or organs.

Article 22

1. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.

2. For this purpose, States Parties shall provide, as they consider appropriate, co-operation in any efforts by the United Nations and other competent intergovernmental organizations or nongovernmental organizations co-operating with the United Nations to protect and assist such a child and to trace the parents or other members of the family of any refugee child in order to obtain information necessary for reunification with his or her family. In cases where no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment for any reason, as set forth in the present Convention.

Article 23

1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.

3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and

recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 24

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To diminish infant and child mortality;

(b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;

(c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;

(d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;

(e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;

(f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 25

States Parties recognize the right of a child who has been placed by the competent authorities for the purposes of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health, to a periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement.

Article 26

1. States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security,

including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law.

2. The benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child.

Article 27

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.

3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.

4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents or other persons having financial responsibility for the child, both within the State Party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having financial responsibility for the child lives in a State different from that of the child, States Parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other appropriate arrangements.

Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

(a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;

(b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;

(c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;

(d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;

(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of

developing countries.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding,

peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

Article 30

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

Article 32

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

(a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;

- (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
- (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

Article 33

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Article 35

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

Article 36

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Article 37

States Parties shall ensure that:

- (a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age;
- (b) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;
- (c) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age. In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;
- (d) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.

Article 38

1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.
2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.
3. States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.
4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

Article 39

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

Article 40

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child's respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society.
2. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of international instruments, States Parties shall, in particular, ensure that:
 - (a) No child shall be alleged as, be accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law by reason of acts or omissions that were not prohibited by national or international law at the time they were committed;
 - (b) Every child alleged as or accused of having infringed the penal law has at least the following guarantees:
 - (i) To be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law;
 - (ii) To be informed promptly and directly of the charges against him or her, and, if appropriate, through his or her parents or legal guardians, and to have legal or other appropriate assistance in the preparation and presentation of his or her defence;
 - (iii) To have the matter determined without delay by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body in a fair hearing according to law, in the presence of legal or other appropriate assistance and, unless it is considered not to be in the best interest of the child, in particular, taking into account his or her age or situation, his or her parents or legal guardians;
 - (iv) Not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt; to examine or have examined adverse witnesses and to obtain the participation and examination of witnesses on his or her behalf under conditions of equality;

(v) If considered to have infringed the penal law, to have this decision and any measures imposed in consequence thereof reviewed by a higher competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body according to law;

(vi) To have the free assistance of an interpreter if the child cannot understand or speak the language used;

(vii) To have his or her privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings.

3. States Parties shall seek to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, and, in particular:

(a) The establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law;

(b) Whenever appropriate and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing that human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected.

4. A variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders; counselling; probation; foster care; education and vocational training programmes and other alternatives to institutional care shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their well-being and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence.

Article 41

Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of the child and which may be contained in:

(a) The law of a State party; or

(b) International law in force for that State.

PART II

Article 42

States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.

Article 43

1. For the purpose of examining the progress made by States Parties in achieving the realization of the obligations undertaken in the present Convention, there shall be established a Committee on the Rights of the Child, which shall carry out the functions hereinafter provided.

2. The Committee shall consist of ten experts of high moral standing and recognized competence in the field covered by this Convention. The members of the Committee shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution, as well as to the principal legal systems.

3. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.

4. The initial election to the Committee shall be held no later than six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention and thereafter every second year. At least four

months before the date of each election, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall subsequently prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties to the present Convention.

5. The elections shall be held at meetings of States Parties convened by the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters. At those meetings, for which two thirds of States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.

6. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. They shall be eligible for re-election if renominated. The term of five of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election, the names of these five members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the meeting.

7. If a member of the Committee dies or resigns or declares that for any other cause he or she can no longer perform the duties of the Committee, the State Party which nominated the member shall appoint another expert from among its nationals to serve for the remainder of the term, subject to the approval of the Committee.

8. The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure.

9. The Committee shall elect its officers for a period of two years.

10. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee. The Committee shall normally meet annually. The duration of the meetings of the Committee shall be determined, and reviewed, if necessary, by a meeting of the States Parties to the present Convention, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

11. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.

12. With the approval of the General Assembly, the members of the Committee established under the present Convention shall receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide.

Article 44

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, reports on the measures they have adopted which give effect to the rights recognized herein and on the progress made on the enjoyment of those rights

- (a) Within two years of the entry into force of the Convention for the State Party concerned;
- (b) Thereafter every five years.

2. Reports made under the present article shall indicate factors and difficulties, if any, affecting the degree of fulfilment of the obligations under the present Convention. Reports shall also contain sufficient information to provide the Committee with a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the Convention in the country concerned.

3. A State Party which has submitted a comprehensive initial report to the Committee need not, in its subsequent reports submitted in accordance with paragraph 1 (b) of the present article, repeat basic information previously provided.

4. The Committee may request from States Parties further information relevant to the

implementation of the Convention.

5. The Committee shall submit to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, every two years, reports on its activities.

6. States Parties shall make their reports widely available to the public in their own countries.

Article 45

In order to foster the effective implementation of the Convention and to encourage international cooperation in the field covered by the Convention:

(a) The specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their mandate. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies as it may consider appropriate to provide expert advice on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their respective mandates. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities;

(b) The Committee shall transmit, as it may consider appropriate, to the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies, any reports from States Parties that contain a request, or indicate a need, for technical advice or assistance, along with the Committee's observations and suggestions, if any, on these requests or indications;

(c) The Committee may recommend to the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to undertake on its behalf studies on specific issues relating to the rights of the child;

(d) The Committee may make suggestions and general recommendations based on information received pursuant to articles 44 and 45 of the present Convention. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be transmitted to any State Party concerned and reported to the General Assembly, together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

PART III

Article 46

The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.

Article 47

The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 48

The present Convention shall remain open for accession by any State. The instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 49

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

2. For each State ratifying or acceding to the Convention after the deposit of the twentieth

instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the deposit by such State of its instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 50

1. Any State Party may propose an amendment and file it with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall thereupon communicate the proposed amendment to States Parties, with a request that they indicate whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and voting upon the proposals. In the event that, within four months from the date of such communication, at least one third of the States Parties favour such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of States Parties present and voting at the conference shall be submitted to the General Assembly for approval.

2. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 1 of the present article shall enter into force when it has been approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations and accepted by a two-thirds majority of States Parties.

3. When an amendment enters into force, it shall be binding on those States Parties which have accepted it, other States Parties still being bound by the provisions of the present Convention and any earlier amendments which they have accepted.

Article 51

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.

2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.

3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to that effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received by the Secretary-General

Article 52

A State Party may denounce the present Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Denunciation becomes effective one year after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General.

Article 53

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.

Article 54

The original of the present Convention, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

IN WITNESS THEREOF the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized thereto by their respective governments, have signed the present Convention.

APPENDIX B

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) Section L - Fourth World Conference on Women

Part IV. Strategic Objectives and Actions

45. In each critical area of concern, the problem is diagnosed and strategic objectives are proposed with concrete actions to be taken by various actors in order to achieve those objectives. The strategic objectives are derived from the critical areas of concern and specific actions to be taken to achieve them cut across the boundaries of equality, development and peace - the goals of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women - and reflect their interdependence. The objectives and actions are interlinked, of high priority and mutually reinforcing. The Platform for Action is intended to improve the situation of all women, without exception, who often face similar barriers, while special attention should be given to groups that are the most disadvantaged.

46. The Platform for Action recognizes that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, because they are indigenous women or because of other status. Many women encounter specific obstacles related to their family status, particularly as single parents; and to their socio- economic status, including their living conditions in rural, isolated or impoverished areas. Additional barriers also exist for refugee women, other displaced women, including internally displaced women as well as for immigrant women and migrant women, including women migrant workers. Many women are also particularly affected by environmental disasters, serious and infectious diseases and various forms of violence against women.

Strategic Objective L - The girl child

259. The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes that "States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or status" (art. 2, para. 1). 11/ However, in many countries available indicators show that the girl child is discriminated against from the earliest stages of life, through her childhood and into adulthood. In some areas of the world, men outnumber women by 5 in every 100. The reasons for the discrepancy include, among other things, harmful attitudes and practices, such as female genital mutilation, son preference - which results in female infanticide and prenatal sex selection - early marriage, including child marriage, violence against women, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, discrimination against girls in food allocation and other practices related to health and well-being. As a result, fewer girls than boys survive into adulthood.

260. Girls are often treated as inferior and are socialized to put themselves last, thus undermining their self-esteem. Discrimination and neglect in childhood can initiate a lifelong downward spiral of deprivation and exclusion from the social mainstream. Initiatives should

be taken to prepare girls to participate actively, effectively and equally with boys at all levels of social, economic, political and cultural leadership.

261. Gender-biased educational processes, including curricula, educational materials and practices, teachers' attitudes and classroom interaction, reinforce existing gender inequalities.

262. Girls and adolescents may receive a variety of conflicting and confusing messages on their gender roles from their parents, teachers, peers and the media. Women and men need to work together with children and youth to break down persistent gender stereotypes, taking into account the rights of the child and the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents as stated in paragraph 267 below.

263. Although the number of educated children has grown in the past 20 years in some countries, boys have proportionately fared much better than girls. In 1990, 130 million children had no access to primary school; of these, 81 million were girls. This can be attributed to such factors as customary attitudes, child labour, early marriages, lack of funds and lack of adequate schooling facilities, teenage pregnancies and gender inequalities in society at large as well as in the family as defined in paragraph 29 above. In some countries the shortage of women teachers can inhibit the enrolment of girls. In many cases, girls start to undertake heavy domestic chores at a very early age and are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities, often resulting in poor scholastic performance and an early drop-out from schooling.

264. The percentage of girls enrolled in secondary school remains significantly low in many countries. Girls are often not encouraged or given the opportunity to pursue scientific and technological training and education, which limits the knowledge they require for their daily lives and their employment opportunities.

265. Girls are less encouraged than boys to participate in and learn about the social, economic and political functioning of society, with the result that they are not offered the same opportunities as boys to take part in decision-making processes.

266. Existing discrimination against the girl child in her access to nutrition and physical and mental health services endangers her current and future health. An estimated 450 million adult women in developing countries are stunted as a result of childhood protein-energy malnutrition.

267. The International Conference on Population and Development recognized, in paragraph 7.3 of the Programme of Action, 14/ that "full attention should be given to the promotion of mutually respectful and equitable gender relations and particularly to meeting the educational and service needs of adolescents to enable them to deal in a positive and responsible way with their sexuality", taking into account the rights of the child to access to information, privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed consent, as well as the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents and legal guardians to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in conformity with the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. Support should be given to integral sexual education for young people with parental support and guidance that stresses the responsibility of males for their own sexuality and fertility and that help them exercise their responsibilities.

268. More than 15 million girls aged 15 to 19 give birth each year. Motherhood at a very young age entails complications during pregnancy and delivery and a risk of maternal death that is much greater than average. The children of young mothers have higher levels of morbidity and mortality. Early child-bearing continues to be an impediment to improvements in the educational, economic and social status of women in all parts of the world. Overall, early marriage and early motherhood can severely curtail educational and employment opportunities and are likely to have a long-term adverse impact on their and their children's quality of life.

269. Sexual violence and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, have a devastating effect on children's health, and girls are more vulnerable than boys to the consequences of unprotected and premature sexual relations. Girls often face pressures to engage in sexual activity. Due to such factors as their youth, social pressures, lack of protective laws, or failure to enforce laws, girls are more vulnerable to all kinds of violence, particularly sexual violence, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, trafficking, possibly the sale of their organs and tissues, and forced labour.

270. The girl child with disabilities faces additional barriers and needs to be ensured non-discrimination and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. 30/

271. Some children are particularly vulnerable, especially the abandoned, homeless and displaced, street children, children in areas in conflict, and children who are discriminated against because they belong to an ethnic or racial minority group.

272. All barriers must therefore be eliminated to enable girls without exception to develop their full potential and skills through equal access to education and training, nutrition, physical and mental health care and related information.

273. In addressing issues concerning children and youth, Governments should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on girls and boys, respectively.

Strategic objective L.1.

Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child
Actions to be taken

274. By Governments:

- (a) By States that have not signed or ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, take urgent measures towards signing and ratifying the Convention, bearing in mind the strong exhortation made at the World Conference on Human Rights to sign it before the end of 1995, and by States that have signed and ratified the Convention, ensure its full implementation through the adoption of all necessary legislative, administrative and other measures and by fostering an enabling environment that encourages full respect for the rights of children;
- (b) Consistent with article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 11/ take measures to ensure that a child is registered immediately after birth and has the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents;
- (c) Take steps to ensure that children receive appropriate financial support from their parents, by, among other measures, enforcing child-support laws;
- (d) Eliminate the injustice and obstacles in relation to inheritance faced by the girl child so that all children may enjoy their rights without discrimination, by, inter alia, enacting, as appropriate, and enforcing legislation that guarantees equal right to succession and ensures equal right to inherit, regardless of the sex of the child;
- (e) Enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is only entered into with the free and full consent of the intending spouses; in addition, enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage and raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;
- (f) Develop and implement comprehensive policies, plans of action and programmes for the survival, protection, development and advancement of the girl child to promote and protect the full enjoyment of her human rights and to ensure equal opportunities for girls; these plans should form an integral part of the total development process;
- (g) Ensure the disaggregation by sex and age of all data related to children in the health, education and other sectors in order to include a gender perspective in planning, implementation and monitoring of such programmes.

275. By Governments and international and non-governmental organizations:

- (a) Disaggregate information and data on children by sex and age, undertake research on the situation of girls and integrate, as appropriate, the results in the formulation of policies, programmes and decision-making for the advancement of the girl child;
- (b) Generate social support for the enforcement of laws on the minimum legal age for marriage, in particular by providing educational opportunities for girls.

Strategic objective L.2.

Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls

Actions to be taken

276. By Governments:

- (a) Encourage and support, as appropriate, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations in their efforts to promote changes in negative attitudes and practices towards girls;

- (b) Set up educational programmes and develop teaching materials and textbooks that will sensitize and inform adults about the harmful effects of certain traditional or customary practices on girl children;
- (c) Develop and adopt curricula, teaching materials and textbooks to improve the self-image, lives and work opportunities of girls, particularly in areas where women have traditionally been underrepresented, such as mathematics, science and technology;
- (d) Take steps so that tradition and religion and their expressions are not a basis for discrimination against girls.

277. By Governments and, as appropriate, international and non-governmental organizations:

- (a) Promote an educational setting that eliminates all barriers that impede the schooling of married and/or pregnant girls and young mothers, including, as appropriate, affordable and physically accessible child-care facilities and parental education to encourage those who have responsibilities for the care of their children and siblings during their school years to return to, or continue with, and complete schooling;
- (b) Encourage educational institutions and the media to adopt and project balanced and non-stereotyped images of girls and boys, and work to eliminate child pornography and degrading and violent portrayals of the girl child;
- (c) Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child and the root causes of son preference, which result in harmful and unethical practices such as prenatal sex selection and female infanticide; this is often compounded by the increasing use of technologies to determine foetal sex, resulting in abortion of female foetuses;
- (d) Develop policies and programmes, giving priority to formal and informal education programmes that support girls and enable them to acquire knowledge, develop self-esteem and take responsibility for their own lives; and place special focus on programmes to educate women and men, especially parents, on the importance of girls' physical and mental health and well-being, including the elimination of discrimination against girls in food allocation, early marriage, violence against girls, female genital mutilation, child prostitution, sexual abuse, rape and incest.

Strategic objective L.3.

Promote and protect the rights of the girl child and increase awareness of her needs and potential

Actions to be taken

278. By Governments and international and non-governmental organizations:

- (a) Generate awareness of the disadvantaged situation of girls among policy makers, planners, administrators and implementors at all levels, as well as within households and communities;
- (b) Make the girl child, particularly the girl child in difficult circumstances, aware of her own potential, educate her about the rights guaranteed to her under all international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, legislation enacted for her and the various measures undertaken by both governmental and non-governmental organizations working to improve her status;
- (c) Educate women, men, girls and boys to promote girls' status and encourage them to work towards mutual respect and equal partnership between girls and boys;

(d) Facilitate the equal provision of appropriate services and devices to girls with disabilities and provide their families with related support services, as appropriate.

Strategic objective L.4.

Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training

Actions to be taken

279. By Governments:

- (a) Ensure universal and equal access to and completion of primary education by all children and eliminate the existing gap between girls and boys, as stipulated in article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; 11/ similarly, ensure equal access to secondary education by the year 2005 and equal access to higher education, including vocational and technical education, for all girls and boys, including the disadvantaged and gifted;
- (b) Take steps to integrate functional literacy and numeracy programmes, particularly for out-of-school girls in development programmes;
- (c) Promote human rights education in educational programmes and include in human rights education the fact that the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights;
- (d) Increase enrolment and improve retention rates of girls by allocating appropriate budgetary resources and by enlisting the support of the community and parents through campaigns and flexible school schedules, incentives, scholarships, access programmes for out-of-school girls and other measures;
- (e) Develop training programmes and materials for teachers and educators, raising awareness about their own role in the educational process, with a view to providing them with effective strategies for gender-sensitive teaching;
- (f) Take actions to ensure that female teachers and professors have the same possibilities and status as male teachers and professors.

280. By Governments and international and non-governmental organizations:

- (a) Provide education and skills training to increase girls' opportunities for employment and access to decision-making processes;
- (b) Provide education to increase girls' knowledge and skills related to the functioning of economic, financial and political systems;
- (c) Ensure access to appropriate education and skills-training for girl children with disabilities for their full participation in life;
- (d) Promote the full and equal participation of girls in extracurricular activities, such as sports, drama and cultural activities.

Strategic objective L.5.

Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition

Actions to be taken

281. By Governments and international and non-governmental organizations:

- (a) Provide public information on the removal of discriminatory practices against girls in food allocation, nutrition and access to health services;

- (b) Sensitize the girl child, parents, teachers and society concerning good general health and nutrition and raise awareness of the health dangers and other problems connected with early pregnancies;
- (c) Strengthen and reorient health education and health services, particularly primary health care programmes, including sexual and reproductive health, and design quality health programmes that meet the physical and mental needs of girls and that attend to the needs of young, expectant and nursing mothers;
- (d) Establish peer education and outreach programmes with a view to strengthening individual and collective action to reduce the vulnerability of girls to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, as agreed to in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and as established in the report of that Conference, recognizing the parental roles referred to in paragraph 267 of the present Platform for Action;
- (e) Ensure education and dissemination of information to girls, especially adolescent girls, regarding the physiology of reproduction, reproductive and sexual health, as agreed to in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and as established in the report of that Conference, responsible family planning practice, family life, reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection and AIDS prevention, recognizing the parental roles referred to in paragraph 267;
- (f) Include health and nutritional training as an integral part of literacy programmes and school curricula starting at the primary level for the benefit of the girl child;
- (g) Emphasize the role and responsibility of adolescents in sexual and reproductive health and behaviour through the provision of appropriate services and counselling, as discussed in paragraph 267;
- (h) Develop information and training programmes for health planners and implementors on the special health needs of the girl child;
- (i) Take all the appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children, as stipulated in article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. 11/

Strategic objective L.6.

Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work

Actions to be taken

282. By Governments:

- (a) In conformity with article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 11/ protect children from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development;
- (b) Define a minimum age for a child's admission to employment in national legislation, in conformity with existing international labour standards and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including girls in all sectors of activity;
- (c) Protect young girls at work, inter alia, through:
 - (i) A minimum age or ages for admission to employment;

- (ii) Strict monitoring of work conditions (respect for work time, prohibition of work by children not provided for by national legislation, and monitoring of hygiene and health conditions at work);
- (iii) Application of social security coverage;
- (iv) Establishment of continuous training and education;
- (d) Strengthen, where necessary, legislation governing the work of children and provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure effective enforcement of the legislation;
- (e) Use existing international labour standards, including, as appropriate, ILO standards for the protection of working children, to guide the formulation of national labour legislation and policies.

Strategic objective L.7.

Eradicate violence against the girl child

Actions to be taken

283. By Governments and, as appropriate, international and non-governmental organizations:

- (a) Take effective actions and measures to enact and enforce legislation to protect the safety and security of girls from all forms of violence at work, including training programmes and support programmes, and take measures to eliminate incidents of sexual harassment of girls in educational and other institutions;
- (b) Take appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the girl child, in the household and in society, from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse;
- (c) Undertake gender sensitization training for those involved in healing and rehabilitation and other assistance programmes for girls who are victims of violence and promote programmes of information, support and training for such girls;
- (d) Enact and enforce legislation protecting girls from all forms of violence, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, genital mutilation, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution and child pornography, and develop age-appropriate safe and confidential programmes and medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence.

Strategic objective L.8.

Promote the girl child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life

Actions to be taken

284. By Governments and international and non-governmental organizations:

- (a) Provide access for girls to training, information and the media on social, cultural, economic and political issues and enable them to articulate their views;
- (b) Support non-governmental organizations, in particular youth non-governmental organizations, in their efforts to promote the equality and participation of girls in society.

Strategic objective L.9.

Strengthen the role of the family* in improving the status of the girl child

Actions to be taken

285. By Governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations:

(a) Formulate policies and programmes to help the family, as defined in paragraph 29 above, in its supporting, educating and nurturing roles, with particular emphasis on the elimination of intra-family discrimination against the girl child;

(b) Provide an environment conducive to the strengthening of the family, as defined in paragraph 29 above, with a view to providing supportive and preventive measures which protect, respect and promote the potential of the girl child;

(c) Educate and encourage parents and caregivers to treat girls and boys equally and to ensure shared responsibilities between girls and boys in the family, as defined in paragraph 29 above. * As defined in para. 29 above.

APPENDIX C

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR DOCUMENTS

1. Annual reports from transnational organizations affiliated with the UN - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), PLAN International, and Coalition for Adolescent Girls:

1a) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF):

The most recent fifteen reports from 1996-2011 are available online

(<http://www.unicef.org/sowc/index.html>) entitled: *Children in War* (1996), *Child Labour* (1997), *Nutrition* (1998), *Education* (1999), the *State of the World's Children* (2000), *Early Childhood* (2001), *Leadership* (2002), *Child Participation* (2003), *Girls, Education and Development* (2004), *Childhood Under Threat* (2005), *Excluded and Invisible* (2006), *Women and Children: the Double Dividend of Gender Equality* (2007), *Women and Children: Child Survival* (2008), *Maternal and Newborn Health* (2009), *Child Rights* (2010) and *Adolescence - An Age of Opportunity* (2011).

1b) Plan International

From this campaign ten reports were created all available at <http://plan-international.org/girls/>: *The State of the World's Girls* (2007), *Behind the Screen – Gender Inequality in Asia* (2008), *Paying the Price: The Economic Cost of Failing to Educate Girls* (2008), *In the Shadow of War* (2008), *Girls in the Global Economy* (2009), *Because they are girls* (2010), *Youth Summary* (2010), *Urban and Digital Frontiers* (2010), *Real Choices, Real Lives* (2010) and *The State of the Girl Child in India* (2010).

2. Official UN documents - the Third General Assembly, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child

2a) General Assembly (GA)

- Fiftieth session - 1995(<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r50.htm>):

Resolution numbers: 153 - *Rights of the child*; 154 - *the Girl Child*; 166 - *Role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Eliminating violence against women*; 167 - *Traffic in Women and Girls*.

- Fifty-eighth session - 2003(<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r58.htm>):

Resolution numbers: 133 - *Policies and programmes involving youth*; 145 - *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*; 147 - *Elimination of domestic violence against women*; 156 - *The girl child*; 157 - *Rights of the child*.

- Sixty-second session - 2007(<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r62.shtml>):

Resolution numbers: 126 - *Policies and programmes involving youth: youth in the global economy - promoting youth participation in social and economic development*; 133 - *Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women*; 134 - *Eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations*; 135 - *United Nations Development Fund for Women*; 137 - *Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly*; 140 - *The girl child*; 141 - *Rights of the child*; 218 - *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.

3) Documents from UN sponsored Non-Governmental Organizations - the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Working Group on Girls, and the Commission on the Status of Women

3a) NGO for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (NGO-CRC)

In total, the NGO-CRC has created twelve general comments: *The aims of education* (2001); *The role of independent national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child* (2002); *General measures of implementation of the CRC* (2003); *adolescent health and development* (2003), *HIV/AIDS and the rights of the child* (2003); *Implementing child rights in early childhood* (2005); *The treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origins* (2005); *The rights of children with disabilities* (2006); *The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment* (2006); *Children's rights in juvenile justice* (2007); *The right to be heard [as children]* (2009); *Indigenous children and their rights under the Convention* (2009).

3b) Working Group on Girls (WGG)

- *Fact Sheets on "the Situation of Girls" -*

The first 8 were completed in 2006: 1) *Right to an Adequate Standard of Living, Poverty and the Girl Child*; 2) *The Right to Education and the Girl Child*; 3) *The Right to Health and the Girl Child*; 4) *The Right to Participate and the Girl Child*; 5) *The Right to Protection, Labour and the Girl Child*; 6) *The Right to Protection, Trafficking, and the Girl Child*; 7) *The Right to Protection and the Girl Child and Gender-Based Violence*; 8) *Right to Protection and Reintegration for Girls Associated with Armed Forces and Groups*; and completed in 2010 9) *Out of the MDG shadows: Girls and Why they Matter*.

3c) *NGO for the Commission on the Status of Women (NGO-CSW)*

54th session in 2010 - 39 NGO statements from:

1) World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts; 2) European Disability Forum; 3) Equality Now; 4) Collective statement by Coalition against Trafficking in Women, Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Grail, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation, Salesian Missions and UNANIMA International; 5) Association nationale Al Hidn; 6) Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW); 7) International Council of Women and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women; 8) International Federation of Business and Professional Women; 9) International Federation of University Women; 10) International Network of Liberal Women; 11) International Planned Parenthood Federation; 12) International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary; 13) Collective statement by Education International, International Trade Union Confederation and Public Services International; International Women's Health Coalition; 14) IPAS; 15) Mother's Union; 16) New Japan Women's Association; 17) International Council of Women and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women; 18) the Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincet DePaul and Salesian Missions, Inc.; 19) Zonta International; 20) Sociologists for Women in Society; 21) Disabled Peoples' International; 22) Stree Atyachar Virodhi Parishad; 23) Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling; 24) Mision Mujer A.C.; 25) Alulbayt Foundation; 26) Legiao de Boa Vontade; 27) Anglican Consultative Council; 28) Collective statement by la Coordination francaise du lobby europeen de femmes, Femmes solidaires and Regards de femmes; 29) World Young Women's Christian Association; 30) the Women's National Commission; 31) African

Women's Development and Communication Network; 32) Collective statement by the Armenian International Women's Association, the Association catholique internationale des services pour la jeunesse feminine, the Coalition against Trafficking in Women, the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas, the International Association of Schools of Social Work, the International Council of Jewish Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Federation of Women Lawyers, the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, the International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Passionists International, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Soroptimist International, the Salvation Army, UNANIMA International, and the United States Committee for the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the World Youth Alliance; 33) Collective Statement by the Association of Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa (New Zealand), Church Women United, Global Action on Aging, Lutheran World Federation, Presbyterian Church USA, Salvation Army, United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society, World Conference of Religions for Peace, World Student Christian Federation, World Young Women's Christian Association and World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women; 34) Collective Statement by the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, the Center for Health and Gender Equity, Incorporated, the Federation for Women and Family Planning, Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer, the International Women's Health Coalition and the World Young Women's Christian Association; 35) Collective Statement by Catholics for Choice, the Center for Health and Gender Equity, Inc., the Girls' Power Initiative, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the International

Alliance of Women, Ipas and Population Action International; 36) Collective Statement by Armenian International Women's Association, Associated Country Women of the World, Baha'i International Community, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, International Association of Women in Radio and Television, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation of Women Lawyers, International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres, International Federation of University Women, Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association, Soroptimist International, Trickle Up Program, United Nations Association of the United States of America, United States Committee for UNIFEM, Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund, World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations and Zonta International; 37) Plan International; 38) Collective Statement by African Action on AIDS, the European Union of Women, the Foundation for Subjective Experience and Research, Hadassah: Women's Zionist Organization of America, the International Alliance of Women, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the International Council of Jewish Women, International Federation for Home Economics, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Federation of Social Workers, the Federation of University Women, the International National Council of German Women's Organizations, the Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association of Thailand, Servas International, Socialist International Women, Soroptimist International, The Salvation Army, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, the Women's Federation for World Peace International, the Women's International Zionist Organization and ZONTA International; and 39) Mouvement Ni Putes Ni Soumises.

APPENDIX D

Timeline of Diagnostic Framing Global Inequality



1995
Global
Inequality

C-CRC: Official discussion began to raise “serious and unresolved questions of inequality and indifference” for the girl child within the UN.

C-CEDAW: The girl child becomes particularly affected through “economic necessity, the weight of tradition, early marriages and early pregnancies often force girls to drop out of school at higher rates than boys before they complete their first cycle of education”.


GA-Res 156: The best interests of the girl child and respect for her views (two key principles of the CRC) were, in fact, being violated, due to global inequality.

GA-Res 157: The larger impact of global inequality becomes detrimental to the girl child in other ways through home or state violence that “instilled fear and insecurity in women’s [and girls’ lives] and were obstacles to the achievement of equality, development and peace”.



2000
Global
Inequality

UNICEF: To establish the context for global inequality: “despite the progress made on many of the goals set at the 1990 World Summit for Children, this has been a decade of undeclared war on women, adolescents and children as poverty, conflict, chronic social instability and preventable diseases such as HIV/AIDS threaten their human rights and sabotage their development”.



2007
Global
Inequality

GA-Res 126: Specifically due to global inequality: “trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and sexual slavery increases the vulnerability of young women to HIV/AIDS infection and is linked to the widespread feminization of poverty, sex tourism, sweatshops and other detrimental consequences of globalization”.

Timeline of Diagnostic Framing Global Inequality



Plan: Not only do the social problems created by global inequality become a human rights issue, but also an issue of development - “it was the rich and powerful who made the commitment in 2000 [through the Millennium Development Goals] but it is the poor and marginalised who bear the brunt of failure”.

UNICEF: the girl child is the center of global inequality.

CAG: the relationship of government choices with economic opportunities for the girl child are further complicated since “with those opportunities, however, also lies the potential for exploitation; social dislocation and weakened traditional structures can bring major risks to the health and safety of girls and young women”.

NGO-CSW: the relationship of government choices on global inequality, where “girls and young women suffer disproportionately in too many areas”.

Timeline of Diagnostic Framing Gender Discrimination

1995
Gender
Discrimination

GA-Res 154: The official discussion began in the UN where “discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child was identified as a critical area of concern”.

GA-Res 156: By using a life-cycle approach, one of the biggest social problems affecting the girl child - violence - became identified.

GA-Res 157: One of the other social problems decided early in the UN concerned healthcare, specifically the ways in which the girl child becomes structurally discriminated against through early motherhood and HIV/AIDS.

2000
Gender
Discrimination

UNICEF: The girl child becomes both directly and indirectly affected by the pervasiveness of sexism before and during her life-course.

2003
Gender
Discrimination

NGO-CRC: Specific discussion of the impact of gender discrimination on early motherhood.

2009
Gender
Discrimination

CAG: On moral, ethical, and human rights grounds, the social problems of the girl child must be paid attention to since: “perhaps no other segment of society globally faces as much exploitation and injustice, and we owe girls our support as integral, yet overlooked, members of the human family” -- the girl child must be placed in the center of the discussion.

WGG: Extended the discussion of the direct and indirect forms of violence affecting the girl child.

Timeline of Diagnostic Framing Gender Discrimination



2010
Gender
Discrimination

C-CSW: Connection of the major two health issues affecting the girl child -- early motherhood and HIV/AIDS.

Plan: Girls are doubly marginalized by both age and sex and are lacking in the basic assets to meet the UN Millennium Development Goals. Particular difficulty in reaching educational parity for the girl child.

UNICEF: Increasing concern over the high rates of HIV/AIDS among the girl child. Also, how poverty, geographical location, and gender affect educational opportunities.

APPENDIX E

Timeline of Prognostic Framing Girls' Rights as a Strategy within the UN

1995
Girls' Rights

C-CRC: The official discussion began with the understanding that “girls are simply human beings who should be seen as individuals and not just as daughters, sisters, wives or mothers, and who should fully enjoy the fundamental rights inherent to their human dignity. The rights of the girl should in no way be ignored or neglected, but rather promoted and protected”.

2003
Girls' Rights

GA-Res 145,147 and 157: How the multiple social problems that continuously affect the life of the girl child become framed as specific violations of human rights in accordance to prior UN conventions.

NGO-CRC: Highlighting specific violations of rights in terms of healthcare.

2007
Girls' Rights

GA-Res 140: Direct statement of the consequences for girl children when her rights are violated.

2008
Girls' Rights

NGO-WGG: The girl child must be separated from adult women since - since: (1) the term “women” is not universally understood to include girls; (2) if girls are grouped with the general categories of “women” or “children,” their particular needs are often overlooked; (3) the empowerment of girls [becomes of] concern to the CSW because they are included in the Beijing Platform for Action (Section L); and (4) concern for gender equality must include all females from the youngest girl to the oldest woman”.

Timeline of Prognostic Framing Girls' Rights as a Strategy within the UN



2009
Girls' Rights

NGO-WGG: For “full gender equality, a human rights approach is also necessary, where at its centre [it] recognizes that the status of women and the extent to which they are able to exercise their rights is fundamental to the development of societies and is indispensable to the achievement of children’s rights and the girl child in particular”.

CAG: Specific social problems identified as violations of girls’ rights, where “in a new global economy girls and young women are no longer as sheltered by their parents and communities, but they also are not armed with education or understanding of their own rights to protect themselves in the world”.



2010
Girls' Rights

Plan: “Girls and boys have the same entitlements to human rights, they face different challenges in accessing them...this lack of opportunity and care is unfair and unjust”.

UNICEF: General statements are used to advocate for women’s rights by indirectly advocating for girls’ rights since: “empowering women and eliminating gender discrimination produces a double dividend – fulfilling the right of women and also helping to save and improve the lives of children”.

Timeline of Prognostic Framing Girls' Rights in Relation to Children's Rights as a Strategy within the UN

2000
Girls' Rights in
Relation to
Children's Rights

UNICEF: Using an analysis that is both age and gender oriented allows for gender equality in relation to girls' rights to be discussed in terms of education where "girl-friendly = child-friendly".

2003
Girls' Rights in
Relation to
Children's Rights

NGO-CRC: In terms of healthcare - "States parties must give careful consideration to prescribed gender norms within their societies with a view to eliminating gender-based discrimination as these norms impact on the vulnerability of both girls and boys to HIV/AIDS. States parties should, in particular, recognize that discrimination in the context of HIV/AIDS often impacts girls more severely than boys".

2009
Girls' Rights in
Relation to
Children's Rights

NGO-CRC: "Children are not a homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds. Programmes also need to ensure that they are culturally sensitive to children from all communities".

Can be classified as motivational framing too.

2010
Girls' Rights in
Relation to
Children's Rights

Plan: For gender equality - girls' rights are of course, not "just about girls...Everyone benefits, including boys and men".

NGO-CRC: In terms of violence - "both girls and boys are at risk of all forms of violence, but violence often has a gender component. For example, girls may experience more sexual violence at home than boys whereas boys may be more likely to encounter - and experience violence within - the criminal justice system".

APPENDIX F

Timeline of Motivational Framing Agency for the Girl Child within the UN

1995
Agency for the
Girl Child

C-CRC: The official discussion began where “only through a comprehensive strategy to promote and protect the rights of girls, starting with the younger generation, would it be possible to build a shared and lasting approach and a wide movement of advocacy and awareness”.

2003
Agency for the
Girl Child

GA-Res 145: Involvement of the girl child herself within the UN, since “only through the active involvement of girls, who are at the root of the life cycle, would it be possible to initiate a movement for change and betterment”.

2007
Agency for the
Girl Child

NGO-WGG: Advocacy for including a physical presence of girl children at various UN meetings.

2009
Agency for the
Girl Child

CAG: Call for direct involvement by transnational organizations for sustainable change.

2010
Agency for the
Girl Child

NGO-CSW: The understanding of knowledge as power where in “order to remove impediments and to enable the active participation of women and girls in decisions that affect their lives, they need to have legal knowledge and inclusion in participatory structures to ensure that they are able to exercise their rights and responsibilities”.

Timeline of Motivational Framing Advocacy of the Girl Child within the UN through Individual and Institutional support

1995
Individual &
Institutional
Support

C-CRC: Larger understanding that the girl child could not complete the journey for girls rights alone -- “In fact, legislative measures send a formal message that traditions and customs contrary to the rights of the child will no longer be accepted, create a meaningful deterrent and clearly contribute to changing attitudes”.

2003
Individual &
Institutional
Support

GA-Res 154: the UN not only “calls upon States [**but**] international organizations as well as non-governmental organizations to help mobilize the necessary financial resources and political support to achieve goals, strategies and actions relating to the survival, development and protection of the girl child in all programmes for children”.

2007
Individual &
Institutional
Support

GA-Res 140: Expansion of institutional support through civil society, such as media and non-governmental organizations.

2008
Individual &
Institutional
Support

NGO-CRC: Advocates for governmental support of the girl child, especially international governmental support.

NGO-WGG: Specific call for collective participation by “creating strategic partnerships and alliances and merging overlapping agendas”.

Timeline of Motivational Framing Advocacy of the Girl Child within the UN through Individual and Institutional support



2009
Individual &
Institutional
Support

CAG: Key advocates for girls' rights should be from all aspects of society to offer a sustainable 'plan of attack' in arguing for girls' rights. Specific focus on improving education and healthcare of the girl child.

Can be classified as prognostic framing too.

NGO-WGG: Articulates how the UN itself can be a space where girls' rights receives its' biggest advocate.



2010
Individual &
Institutional
Support

Plan: Argues for the need of adult leaders "from multiple social institutions including parents, teachers, community and religious leaders, civil society organizations, government institutions, policy makers, the judicial system, the media, and the private sectors to advocate for girls' rights".