

TOOLS

Tool 5.1 Areas of policy reform and their potential impacts on children

AREAS OF POLICY REFORM AND THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON CHILDREN			
AREA OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION	EXAMPLES OF REFORM	POTENTIAL POSITIVE EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS	POTENTIAL NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
Economic policy reforms (macro and micro)	Fiscal stimulus	Improve household livelihoods enabling investment in child well-being	Children's well-being is deprioritized compared to other household members Fiscal consolidation in the medium term can reduce social spending and adversely impact the quality and availability of public goods and services that affect rights to health, education, standard of living, etc.
	Privatization of state-owned enterprises (e.g. utilities, marketing boards)	Increased investment and/or efficiency gains may improve quality of services or expand fiscal space for investments in social sectors	Privatized enterprises may lay off employees (affecting household incomes); consumer prices may rise (e.g. for utilities); privatized entities may deliver poorer service
	Trade liberalization	May lead to economic growth and poverty reduction, typically for some groups, enabling greater investment in children	May undermine livelihoods of some groups, increasing child poverty and risk of exploitation and abuse; may also undermine equity in service provision
	Expansion of extractive industries	May increase adult employment opportunities and contribute to economic growth	Could affect children's health and security
	Road infrastructure programmes	May increase adult employment opportunities and contribute to economic growth, improving household livelihoods; may facilitate children's access to schools and health care	Children may be at greater risk of accidents; some health risks from increased pollution; may increase the demand for child labour

Social policy reforms	Improved targeting of social assistance system	Could increase incomes in poor households and enable greater investment in children	Certain groups of disadvantaged children may lose access to entitlements
	Abolishing school fees	Removes financial barriers to poor children's access to education	Quality may suffer unless sufficient funding is in place
Governance and institutional reforms	Civil society capacity building	Should strengthen capacity to deliver key services and advocate on behalf of disadvantaged groups	If child-focused services or organizations are not specifically targeted, these may fall behind other types of provision with stronger lobbies
	Political and fiscal decentralization	May improve quality of key services used by children	Inequalities in provision may increase unless well regulated and monitored
Security cooperation	Training of police or army, counter-terrorism measures, cooperation on drugs control	May improve security and law-enforcement, making children's communities safer	Children may be caught in cross-fire, particularly in counter-terrorism or drug control operations, with risk of injury or death
Environmental policy reforms	Investment in renewable energy	Could reduce environmental risks to children in poor areas	Immediate benefits may accrue mainly to businesses rather than disadvantaged individuals