

5. World's Children Report 2025 – Reports and Indices

400 million children globally deprived in least two critical areas – UNICEF. The UNICEF State of the World's Children 2025 report highlights a deepening global crisis where conflict and climate hazards are exacerbating child poverty, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, while acknowledging India's significant progress in multidimensional poverty reduction towards meeting SDG 1.2.

1. Report Overview & Context

Title of 2025 Report – “Ending Child Poverty – Our shared imperative.”

Nature of Report – This is UNICEF's flagship annual report, first published in 1980.

Purpose – It aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of global trends, raise awareness, influence policy, and provide evidence to governments and civil society regarding the challenges children face globally.

Definition of 'Child' – Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (adopted by UNGA in 1989), a child is defined as any human being under the age of 18 years (unless majority is attained earlier by applicable law).

2. Key Findings – The Global Child Poverty Crisis

The report highlights a dual crisis of monetary poverty and severe deprivation.

Extent of Deprivation – In low and middle-income countries, more than one in five children are deprived of at least two key factors essential for development (health, housing, nutrition, etc.).

Monetary Poverty –

412 million children globally live in extreme monetary poverty.

Threshold – These children survive on less than \$3 per day.

Multidimensional Deprivation – 417 million children suffer from severe deprivation.

Criteria – Lack of access to at least two essential areas – education, health, housing, nutrition, sanitation, and clean water.

3. Regional & Contextual Distribution of Poverty

The burden of child poverty is not shared equally across the globe. The following table compares the intensity of poverty across different regions and contexts –

Region / Context	Key Statistics & Observations
Sub-Saharan Africa	Highest Burden – Accounts for 76% of children living in extreme poverty. Disproportionate Impact – Hosts only 23% of the global child population but holds the majority of the poverty share.
South Asia	Ranked as the second-highest burden region for child poverty globally.
High-Income Countries	Relative Poverty – About 50 million children live in monetary poverty Definition – Households earning significantly less income than the community average.
Conflict-Affected Areas	Prevalence – Almost 1 in 5 children lives in a conflict zone. Trend – Unlike stable nations, child poverty rates are rising in fragile/conflict-affected countries.

4. Intersecting Threats – Climate & Conflict

Conflict as a Driver – Fragility and conflict are deepening poverty, creating a divergence where stable countries improve while conflict zones regress.

Extreme Climate Hazards – Four out of five children face at least one extreme climate hazard annually (e.g., heatwaves, floods, storms).

Impact – These hazards compound existing poverty and put the future development of children at risk.

5. India-Specific Findings

The report notes significant progress in India regarding poverty alleviation.

Demographics – India is home to approximately 460 million children under the age of 18.

Progress on SDGs – India is on track to meet SDG 1.2.

Goal – To reduce poverty by half in all its dimensions by 2030.

NITI Aayog Data (Multidimensional Poverty Index) –

Poverty Reduction – Between 2013-14 and 2022-23, India lifted 248 million people (including children) out of multidimensional poverty.

Index Drop – The poverty index reduced significantly from 29.2% to 11.3%.

6. Policy Recommendations

UNICEF emphasizes that investing in children is the most effective strategy for long-term societal benefit. Governments are urged to focus on the following areas –

Inclusive Social Protection – Expand programs to safeguard vulnerable families. Ensure these families have consistent access to basic needs.

Equitable Access to Quality Services – Prioritize marginalized communities. Ensure access to quality education, healthcare, nutrition, and sanitation.

Economic Security for Caregivers – Promote decent work opportunities. Ensure caregivers have the economic security necessary to support their children's long-term development.

Strategic Governance

Embed Child Rights – Integrate child rights directly into national policies and government budgets.

Prioritize Reduction – Make child poverty reduction a central goal of governance.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/400-million-children-globally-deprived-in-least-two-critical-areas-unicef/article70302928.ece>

