Globally, inequities in education persisted, based on gender, poverty, location and deeply rooted social and cultural barriers. Such barriers were often amplified in secondary education, which in many countries was neither free nor compulsory. Pre-primary education had expanded considerably since 2000, yet half the children aged 3 to 6 remained unenrolled, with progress unevenly distributed between countries. In 2013, UNICEF helped approximately 3.6 million children in countries affected by conflict or natural disasters to access formal and non-formal education opportunities in safe, protected areas, and considered emergency response through advocacy, preparedness planning, risk assessments and back-to-school campaigns at various levels.

On protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence, UNICEF issued in 2013 a revised global framework on child labour, seeking to improve understanding of its underlying causes and help eliminate the practice altogether; launched, with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a comprehensive analysis on female genital mutilation; intensified efforts in several countries with medium and high prevalence rates to put an end to child marriage; and responded to the protection needs of children in more than 50 countries affected by armed conflict and natural disasters.

At the end of 2012, approximately 2.1 million young people aged 10 to 19, of whom 57 per cent were female, were living with HIV. An estimated 260,000 children under 15 years of age became infected with HIV in 2012. Sub-Saharan Africa remained the region most affected by HIV and AIDS, with more than 90 per cent of AIDS-related deaths occurring among adolescents. In 2012, 62 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV received antiretroviral therapy to prevent mother-to-child transmission. For children under 15 years of age, access to antiretroviral therapy increased by 14 per cent between 2011 and 2012.

On 18 December (decision 69/532), the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the special session of the General Assembly on children (see above).

### Promotion and protection of the rights of children

At the request of the General Assembly [A/69/484], the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee considered the item on the promotion and protection of the rights of children. The Committee had before it a report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict [A/69/212]; a report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly on children (see p. 1307); a report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child [A/69/260]; the annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children [A/69/264]; and notes and letters on issues related to children’s rights. At the end of the debate, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly adopt three draft resolutions on child, early and forced marriage; the rights of the child; and on protecting children from bullying (see below).

The General Assembly, by resolution 68/273 of 20 May (see p. 763), decided to convene, on 20 November, a high-level meeting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child [YUN 1989, p. 560] (see p. 764). On 18 December, the Assembly, in resolution 69/157 (ibid.), urged States to consider acceding to or ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto and to implement them effectively and fully. In resolution 69/156 of 18 December (see p. 877), it urged States to enact, enforce and uphold laws and policies aimed at preventing and ending child, early and forced marriage. In resolution 69/187 of 18 December (see p. 802), on migrant children and adolescents, the Assembly called on countries of origin, transit and destination to facilitate family reunification as an objective to promote the welfare and the best interest of migrant children, including adolescents, as applicable under national law, due process and the relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto. By resolution 69/194 of 18 December (see p. 1440), the Assembly adopted the United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December (meeting 73), the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee [A/69/484], adopted resolution 69/158 without vote [agenda item 64 (a)].

### Protecting children from bullying

The General Assembly,

Emphasizing that the Convention on the Rights of the Child constitutes the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and that States parties to the Convention shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized therein,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the rights of the child and the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council that are relevant to the protection of children against bullying,

Recalling also the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, and noting the