

## **UNICEF launches a global Child Safeguarding Toolkit for Business**

GENEVA, 19 June 2018 – UNICEF has launched a new tool designed to help companies understand their exposure to child-rights related risks and make informed investment decisions.

The *Child Safeguarding Toolkit for Business* is a practical tool that allows companies to identify, assess and address risks to children they interact with; aiming at preventing any physical, sexual and emotional abuse and maltreatment by employees and other persons whom the company is responsible for.

Most companies encounter children at some point during their business activities, for example through sales, business travel or events, or indirectly through online contact with children and their data – making the guidance relevant for all companies across industries.

*“Child safeguarding is a key pillar of our efforts to promote better business for children. With this toolkit we want to help companies analyze child-related risks and make decisions that are good for children and good for business.”* said Gary Stahl, the Director of UNICEF’s Private Fundraising and Partnership Division.

The toolkit guides companies through six steps in the process of developing a child safeguarding programme. It outlines procedures for setting up a child safeguarding policy, rolling out the implementation plan and addressing and reporting potential allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards children. It also provides guidance for employees on how to take relevant action when being faced with potential or actual safeguarding risks. Throughout the toolkit, scenarios from various business environments are used to demonstrate the work in practice.

The guidance outlined in the Toolkit is informed by the practical experiences of companies that have established child safeguarding policies and programs, as well as the ongoing work of UNICEF in developing human rights and business guidance. The materials have been developed and tested as part of a three-year partnership between UNICEF and The LEGO Group.

*“Everything we do at the LEGO Group is for and about the child. They are our role models. Therefore, operating a responsible business towards children has always been at the core of our values and actions, starting with a relentless focus on safe high-quality products. Through our partnership with UNICEF we have further strengthened our child safeguarding policies to ensure the children we interact with are engaging in safe physical and digital play experiences. We hope this Toolkit will inspire and provide guidance to other companies seeking to implement a child rights approach to their business,”* commented Kathrine Kirk Muff, Vice President Social Responsibility and Engagement, the LEGO Group.

Global studies suggest child abuse remains rampant - more than 1 billion children aged 2–17 have suffered physical, sexual or emotional violence or neglect in the past year. Freedom from abuse is every child’s right, and safeguarding children against abuse is part of a company’s responsibility to respect and support child rights, as stated in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

*“There is increased recognition of the global nature and scale of child abuse and maltreatment. Every company whose employees or business partners engage with children - face-to-face or online - has a legal and moral duty of care to do all it can to protect children from harm. A child safeguarding policy and program, provides companies with a formal approach to ensuring the well-being of children, while also protecting the company, its employees and reputation.”*, says Ida Hyllested, who has been leading this work at UNICEF’s CRB Unit.

The Child Safeguarding Toolkit with accompanying tools and templates can be accessed [here](#).

For additional information and questions, please contact Riina Kasurinen, Child Rights and Business, [rkasurinen@unicef.org](mailto:rkasurinen@unicef.org)