

World Children's Day – Listen to the Future

Governments Toolkit

World Children's Day (WCD), celebrated on **November 20th**, is UNICEF's global day for children, by children. It marks the anniversary of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** and serves as a call to action for schools, communities, and institutions to engage with and support children.

The **2024 theme, "Listen to the Future"**, calls on governments to recognize that **children's lives are at a crossroads** due to significant global challenges such as **conflict, climate change, and disruptive technology**.

UNICEF's flagship State of the World's Children (SOWC) report will be released this year on World Children's Day, 20 November. SOWC 2024 will focus on three megatrends affecting children today and in the future: **the climate crisis, disruptive technologies and demographic change**.



Governments must ensure that **children's rights remain non-negotiable** and are central to decisions made today that will impact their futures. Upholding these rights is essential to achieving the world we all want to live in.

Why Government Involvement Matter on World Children's Day

- Governments play a pivotal role in securing a **safe, livable future for children** by creating policies that protect their rights and amplify their voices.
- By engaging with children on issues like **conflict, climate change, disruptive technology**, governments can ensure that future generations are heard, included and empowered to shape the world they will inherit.

Why Governments Should Listen to Children

- **Children's futures are in danger** due to current global challenges. **Conflict** threatens their safety, **climate change** endangers the planet they will inherit, and **disruptive technologies** may widen inequalities depending on how it is managed.
- **Children's rights are a compass** for navigating these global challenges. By upholding the rights in the CRC, governments can build a future that prioritizes safety, equality, and opportunity for all children.

- Children have a **unique perspective** on the challenges of today & the solutions for tomorrow. They deserve a seat at the table, as their ideas and opinions will shape the policies that affect their future.
- By encouraging children to share their ideas about the future, governments can better understand how to design policies that reflect the needs of future generations.
- Governments are **responsible for ensuring that today's actions** do not compromise future generations. By listening to children, governments can work toward creating sustainable, inclusive solutions that guarantee long term benefits for all.

Activations for Governments – Engaging with Children’s Voices on WCD

1. National Consultations with Children

- **Host National Dialogues:** Governments can organize **national consultations** with children on WCD, where children from diverse backgrounds can share their thoughts on how current policies are affecting their future. Focus areas could include:
 - **Climate Change:** What environmental policies can ensure a livable planet for future generations?
 - **Disruptive Technologies:** How can governments ensure that technological advancements benefit all children equally?
- **Children’s Councils:** Establish child or youth councils or advisory boards where children can actively participate in discussions on national policy and announce its creation on WCD!

2. Integrate Children’s Rights into Policy

- **Existing Policies:** Launch a review of **existing national policies** to evaluate their alignment with children’s rights, especially in areas like education, social services, environmental protection, and digital inclusion.
- **Commit to Building National Action Plans for Children, on WCD!** Governments can commit to creating or updating national action plans to align with global challenges affecting children’s rights. These plans can emphasize reducing inequalities, enhancing digital literacy, and mitigating climate risks.



3. Kids Takeover is part of the DNA of WCD



• **Kids Takeovers** were used as the ideal expression of WCD and of the commitment of organizations and government as partners to making this signature day one of action for children, by children.

• **Kids Takeovers** encompass any moment when children and young people **'take charge'** or are empowered to put forward their views, implement their ideas and take action in their community. The takeovers can be adapted to any theme or focus area.

Kids Takeovers can be an invaluable platform for governments to engage with children and young people and understand how children perceive their role in driving progress for child rights and encourage them to take action to realize every right.

3. Public Campaigns and Commitments

- **Government Campaigns:** Launch a national awareness campaign for WCD, using **"Listen to the Future"** as a call to action. Encourage governmental offices, agencies, and institutions to host events where children can share their thoughts on conflict, climate, and technology.
- **Public Statements and Pledges:** On WCD, issue a **public statement reaffirming the government's commitment to children's rights**. Highlight specific initiatives that address conflict, climate change, and technology's impact on children or any child right.

4. Host Public Events with Children

- **Listen to the Future Town Halls:** Organize local and national town hall meetings where children can discuss the **big global challenges** with government officials. This could be a platform for children to ask questions, propose solutions, and participate in real-time discussions on critical issues.
- **Child-Led Debates and Forums:** Governments can host child-led debates and forums, offering children a chance to publicly share their ideas for tackling issues on child rights.
- **WCD Award for Children's Contributions:** Create a government sponsored award for children who make meaningful contributions to society by advocating for child rights.

