



TARGET 16.2



PROTECT CHILDREN FROM ABUSE, EXPLOITATION, TRAFFICKING AND VIOLENCE

unicef  for every child

KEY ASKS FOR 2020 SDG VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Goal area 16 includes target 16.2 – *End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture of children* – which is of critical importance to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals. As Governments are reporting SDG progress and plans, including for SDG 16.2, there is an opportunity to strengthen the connections between global reporting process and national implementation. Such reports highlight the everyday experience in the lives of millions of children throughout the world, occurring in all settings where children live. Globally, three in four young children are regularly subjected to violent discipline by caregivers; one in three children experience bullying; and one in four young children live with a mother who is victim of intimate partner violence. Some 15 million girls aged 15-19 have experienced forced sex in their lifetime. The Convention on the Rights of the Child places a legal obligation on States to protect children from all forms of violence, and a [growing body of evidence from around the world shows that violence is preventable](#).



KEY ASKS

To achieve Target 16.2, progress must be driven from the national level. Governments must lead and be supported to implement multi-pronged evidence-based strategies to prevent and end violence. UNICEF urges all governments to:

- **Adopt a timebound and costed national plan to End Violence Against Children**, which clearly defines national objectives, priorities and responsibilities for implementation across relevant ministries and other government entities;
- **Implement and reform laws to ensure the prohibition of all forms of violence against children** including physical, sexual and emotional violence – in all settings, including schools, the home and institutions;
- **Strengthen national child protection systems** by making critical social services available to support all children at risk or victims of violence; and enhance coordination between social welfare, education, health and justice sectors; prioritizing strengthening the social service workforce;
- **Put in place nation-wide positive parenting programmes, accompanied by education programmes for children** and communication campaigns, to challenge harmful behaviors and prevent violence;
- Ensure **public financial investment is sufficient to support national interventions** to prevent and respond to violence across all sectors; and provide appropriate budget allocations for effective implementation of national plans to end violence against children;
- Monitor implementation of Target 16.2 through **investment in the collection of quality, timely and disaggregated evidence on violence against children**, and integration of data into national statistics systems and strategies.



MONITOR – THE IMPORTANCE OF DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE

UNICEF urges all Governments to prioritize the collection, analysis, dissemination and use of disaggregated data for key SDG indicators. This includes strengthening systems to collect administrative data on incidents of violence reported to authorities or service providers and collecting data on the prevalence and circumstances of violence through dedicated violence against children surveys or through the inclusion of modules to capture violence against children in other national household surveys. [For more information on how UNICEF supports data collection for child protection please see here](#).

- **16.2.1: Proportion of children aged 1-17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month.**

UNICEF's global databases include data for children aged 1-14 years. National statistical offices are required to expand this indicator to include children up to 17 years of age; methodological work is ongoing to assess whether modifications are needed to capture information relevant also for older adolescents between the ages of 15 and 17. Disaggregation by age and sex is required and disaggregation by household wealth, place of residence, and geographic location are also recommended.

16.2.3: Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18.

There is currently no established best practice for measuring and producing statistics on the sensitive issue of sexual violence that has been agreed upon internationally. As a result, different approaches have been developed to gather data that has made comparisons between countries problematic. Underreporting on experiences of sexual violence generally and particularly among boys, is a challenge. Specialized approaches to ensure safe, ethical and confidential disclosure, especially among children, need to be built into surveys, which must also include a referral process.



INVEST -- SOCIAL SPENDING AND PROGRESS ON RESULTS FOR CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

Failing to prevent and effectively respond to violence against children can have lifelong impacts on health, well-being and attitudes towards family and relationships, which can perpetuate the cycle of violence. The consequences of violence against children may place an important economic burden on society – [estimated at up to USD\\$ 7 trillion each year](#). However, in 2015, less than 0.6 per cent of [Official Development Assistance \(ODA\) was allocated to ending violence against children](#). In terms of national budgets, the financial resources made available to support State's obligations to protect children from violence are rarely perceptible.

UNICEF urges all Governments to establish or strengthen tracking of resource allocation for child protection as a necessary first step to assess the degree to which children's right to protection from violence is realized. Countries and donors are encouraged to use available tools to advance Violence Against Children (VAC) results through the best use of ODA and public budgets.



ACTIVATE -- AWARENESS BUILDING & MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

For national efforts to reach Target 16.2 to succeed, decision-makers must tackle: social acceptance of violence against children, including harmful attitudes and behaviors that exist among policy and law makers, government officials, front-line workers and communities; legislation which condones or fails to prevent violence; and lack of child-friendly reporting mechanisms. UNICEF encourages Governments to involve children and adolescents in learning about their rights and the SDGs through participatory means:

- **The process for preparing the 2020 national review should directly involve children and adolescent girls and boys, especially the most marginalized or excluded.** Children and youth are often at the forefront of demanding change. For example, when UNICEF launched a digital activation of the #ENDviolence in schools campaign in September 2018, young people were asked if they had ever felt worried about violence in and around their schools. The response was unprecedented: within one week, over one million young people responded, including responses, as well as more than 25,000 long-form suggestions about how to make schools safer. In December 2018, some 100 youth from around the world gathered in Johannesburg to turn their peers' suggestions into a first of its kind #ENDviolence Youth Manifesto, calling on world leaders to [take action to end violence in schools](#). Such efforts to gather opinions from young people and through consultations (on and/or offline), surveys or polls (e.g. [U-Report](#)) or focus group discussions should be used to inform the VNR report, including the number of young people involved in the process.
- **Provide spaces for children, adolescents and youth to learn about, discuss and take action on the SDGs, including *Ending Violence*.** UNICEF can support this effort due to our existing work in this space and creating child-friendly education and entertainment materials through our foundational partnerships on the [World's Largest Lesson](#) and [Comics Uniting Nations](#). UNICEF's [Youth Activate Talk Methodology](#) is also a platform from children to express their ideas on the SDGs through a variety of mediums. To support child and youth awareness, action and meaningful participation on the topic of ending violence in and around schools, UNICEF together with partners has developed the following tools to assist governments and educators to bring the principles of SDG 16 to children:
 - UNICEF implemented a digital poll about violence and schools that received one million responses. The responses formed the youth produced [the #ENDviolence Youth Manifesto](#), articulating young people's demands for ending violence in schools.
 - A [Safe to Learn](#) lesson plan for classes to learn about school-based violence and discuss solutions.
 - The [School Superhero Comic Contest](#) which asked children and youth to develop a superhero that can end violence in schools. The winning entry was developed into a full comic book which raises awareness about the issue of violence in and around schools.
- **Awareness-raising and participation should be seen as part of a continuum to regularly, meaningfully and consistently engage children, adolescents and young people as agents of change to influence behaviors and social norms amongst themselves, their households and their communities.** This goes beyond engagement just for the purposes of reporting periods, but rather creating standing mechanisms and spaces for young people to engage and have their perspectives heard in decision and policy-making processes as well as across media and communications channels for the purpose of solidifying long-term positive changes in behaviors and social norms.
- Finally, UNICEF is working alongside member states to offer strategic guidance and technical expertise; and is promoting evidence generation and knowledge exchange at country, regional and global levels. All efforts must be underpinned by coordinated multi-partner action, including with the Office of the Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children and the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children and other partners (including young people themselves, and draw on a common package of evidence-based strategies. [INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children](#), provides the first globally agreed set of actions to meet SDG targets for effective prevention of and response to violence against children.