



Ending Corporal Punishment of Children: Africa E-newsletter

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Global Initiative to
**End All Corporal Punishment
of Children**

In this issue:

As we release our first issue for 2017, we are delighted to present this year's edition of our annual global report. The report sets out what needs to be done to end all corporal punishment of children globally, and how to do it. Read on for further details about national campaigns and advocacy interventions including Togo's initiative to move from prohibition to elimination.

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1. Who we are

The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (www.endcorporalpunishment.org) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) which aims to act as a catalyst to encourage more action and progress towards ending all corporal punishment in all continents. We support national campaigns with relevant information and assistance.

The Africa project of the Global Initiative aims specifically to increase the number

of states in Africa committed to and actively pursuing the prohibition and elimination of all corporal punishment of children, in the family, schools and all other settings. For more information, please contact Sonia Vohito at: vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org.

Through this newsletter we aim to keep civil society organisations and other stakeholders informed and encourage networking around the issue of corporal punishment of children. We encourage readers to forward the newsletter to whoever might be interested and we encourage organisations to [sign up to the aims](#) of the Global Initiative.

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2. Recent developments in Africa

Positive moves

Togo: In January 2017, with the support of Plan International Sweden and in collaboration with the Global Initiative, [Plan International Togo](#) and the [Togolese National Coalition on Education For All](#) (CNT/EPT) held a workshop to adopt a national strategy for moving from prohibition to elimination of corporal punishment of children in Togo. The national strategy is expected to inform an upcoming national campaign on the elimination of corporal punishment in the various settings of children's lives in Togo. The event coincided with the 10th anniversary of the Togolese Children's Code, which for the first time in Africa, prohibited corporal punishment of children in all settings. This innovative national strategy aims to test an approach that could be scaled up to other countries if proven effective. The objectives of the workshop included sharing best practices that successfully contributed to eliminate corporal punishment in other similar contexts, as well as defining key messages to be used in the forthcoming national campaign in Togo. For more information please contact Plan International Togo: Amouda.Badjala@plan-international.org and Essoh.Ali@plan-international.org.

Other initiatives

Malawi: The Malawi Human Rights Commission held a public inquiry in October 2016 on the status of children's rights with a focus on protection from corporal punishment in public schools. The meeting involved group discussions with children, parents and other stakeholders on the issue of corporal punishment in schools. The overall aim of the inquiry was to generate evidence from lived

experiences and discuss the root causes of the violence and deprivation of children's rights; The Malawi Human Rights Commission subsequently intend to review existing laws and policies which affect parents, guardians and children and ultimately recommend law reform to protect children from corporal punishment in schools. Note: Corporal punishment of children is lawful in the home, alternative care settings, day care and schools.

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3. Campaigns and other moves towards prohibition

National campaigns

Egypt. In collaboration with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and with EU support, UNICEF Egypt is running a campaign called "Awladna" (meaning our children), which aims to reduce violence at home and promote positive parenting. Targeting parents, caregivers and parents-to-be, the campaign is part of a holistic approach to support the development of child protection policies and to raise public awareness regarding child abuse in all its forms. In support of the Awladna campaign, local fashion designer Jude Benhalim designed a limited-edition bracelet to increase related awareness and speak to a fashion-focused audience. The bracelet was disseminated along with a message on alarming statistics on child abuse in Egypt. (*Daily News Egypt*, 3 February 2017). Note: Corporal punishment is lawful in the home, alternative care settings, day care and possibly schools. Prohibition in penal institutions requires confirmation.

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4. Human rights monitoring

Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No.20

In December 2016, the Committee on the Rights of the Child released its [General Comment No. 20 on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence](#). Paragraph 49 states: "The Committee refers States parties to the recommendations in general comments No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to

freedom from all forms of violence and No. 18 (2014) on harmful practices for comprehensive legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to bring an end to all forms of violence, including a legal prohibition on corporal punishment in all settings, and to transform and bring an end to all harmful practices.”

Key decisions and recommendations, etc.

The **African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** recently released the concluding observation of its 26th ordinary session in November 2015. Examining [Lesotho](#)’s and [Gabon](#)’s initial reports, the Committee recommended that the state parties ban corporal punishment of children in all settings. The Committee further recommended that Lesotho sensitise its population on positive discipline.

The **Human Rights Committee** examined the initial state party report of [Ghana](#) at its 117th session in June/July 2016. In its concluding observations, the Committee noted the widespread acceptance and practice of corporal punishment of children, particularly in the family and in schools. The Committee recommended that the state put an end to corporal punishment in all settings.

At the 16th session of the **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** in August/September 2016, the initial state party report of [Ethiopia](#) was examined. The Committee expressed concern at the lack of legislation protecting children with disabilities from corporal punishment and recommended the prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment in all spheres.

The **Committee on the Rights of the Child** held its 73rd session in September 2016. The combined third to fifth state party report of [Sierra Leone](#) was examined; the Committee recommended that corporal punishment of children be prohibited in all settings and that the state strengthen its awareness-raising programmes. In its concluding observations on the second state party report of [South Africa](#), the Committee welcomed the prohibition of corporal punishment in penal institutions and in alternative care settings but expressed concern at the legality and widespread practice of violent punishment in homes. Law reform towards explicit prohibition in the home was recommended, as well as the implementation of measures aiming to eradicate its practice in all settings.

The **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women** examined the combined fifth and sixth state party report of [Burundi](#) at its 65th

session in November 2016. In its concluding observations, the Committee expressed concern that girls were often still submitted to sexual and gender-based violence at school and recommended that corporal punishment be abolished in practice.

The 26th session of the **Universal Periodic Review** was held in November 2016. A recommendation to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings was made to [Zimbabwe](#); the Government has not yet responded. Other recommendations on the creation of a National Child Rights Policy and child protection systems were immediately accepted.

Finally, the **Committee Against Torture** held its 59th session in November/December 2016. In its concluding observations on [Cabo Verde](#)'s initial state party report the Committee expressed concern at the frequent use of corporal punishment of children at homes and schools and recommended that the Government take step to put an end to these practices. The second state party report of [Namibia](#) was also examined: the Committee wrongly welcomed prohibition of corporal punishment in the home, alternative care and penal system and recommended that all laws prohibiting corporal punishment be implemented and that awareness-raising campaigns be conducted. In fact, prohibition is still to be achieved in the home, alternative care settings and day care. Corporal punishment is unlawful in penal institutions and as a sentence for crime under a 1991 Supreme Court ruling but prohibition has not yet been confirmed through law reform.

Briefing the human rights bodies

The Global Initiative regularly briefs human rights treaty monitoring bodies prior to examination of state parties, and encourages national NGOs and human rights institutions to do likewise. We are particularly trying to identify “key” NGOs and human rights institutions in each state with whom we can work more closely in briefing the treaty bodies: if you/your organisation is interested please contact vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org.

Below is a list of African states coming up for examination by the treaty bodies. For deadlines for submitting briefings to the Committees, please see the individual country reports on the [Global Initiative website](#). We are always willing to advise NGOs and human rights institutions on the practical details of how to submit briefings (email vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org).

The [African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child](#) will meet

at its 29th ordinary session in April 2017, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (to be confirmed). The Committee will consider state party reports from [Chad](#), [Cote d'Ivoire](#), [Mauritius](#), [Sierra Leone](#) and [UR Tanzania](#).

Committee on the Rights of the Child:

- (1) Session 75 (May 2017). The Committee will examine [Cameroon](#)
- (2) Session 77 Pre-Sessional Working Group (June 2017). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for [Angola](#) and the [Seychelles](#)
- (3) Session 78 Pre-Sessional Working Group (Oct 2017). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for [Lesotho](#) and [Niger](#)

Committee Against Torture:

- (1) Session 60 (Apr/May 2017). The Committee will adopt the List of Issues for [Rwanda](#)
- (2) Session 62 (Nov/Dec 2017). The Committee will examine [Cameroon](#), [Mauritius](#) and [Rwanda](#) and adopt the List of Issues Prior to Reporting for [Malawi](#)

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women:

- (1) Session 66 (Feb/Mar 2017). The Committee will examine [Rwanda](#)
- (2) Session 68 Pre-Sessional Working Group (Mar 2017). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for [Burkina Faso](#) and [Kenya](#)
- (3) Session 67 (July 2017). The Committee will examine [Niger](#) and [Nigeria](#)
- (4) Session 69 Pre-Sessional Working Group (July 2017). The PSWG will adopt the List of Issues Prior to Reporting for [Mauritius](#)

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

- (1) Session 7 Pre-Sessional Working Group (Mar 2017). The PSWG will adopt the List of Issues for [Morocco](#)
- (2) Session 18 (Aug 2017). The Committee will examine [Morocco](#) and adopt the List of Issues Prior to Reporting for [Tunisia](#)
- (3) Session 8 Pre-Sessional Working Group (Sept 2017). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for [Seychelles](#) and [Sudan](#)

Human Rights Committee:

- (1) Session 119 (Mar 2017). The Country Report Task Forces will adopt Lists of Issues for [Swaziland](#) (non-reporting state), [DR Congo](#) and [Mauritius](#)
- (2) Session 120 (Jul 2017). The Committee will examine [Madagascar](#) and [Swaziland](#), the Country Report Task Forces will adopt the List of Issues for [Liberia](#) and the List of Issues Prior to Reporting for [Chad](#)
- (3) Session 121 (Oct/Nov 2017). The Committee will examine [Cameroon](#), [DR](#)

[Congo](#) and [Mauritius](#)

The Universal Periodic Review

The obligation to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment of children continues to be raised with states in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of their overall human rights records. The Global Initiative submits briefings on every state being reviewed, sharing advance draft briefings with relevant organisations to encourage submissions at national level. We also conduct a follow up programme, pursuing the issue with states that accept recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment by writing to key NGOs, NHRIs and Government ministers, and undertake ongoing analysis of coverage of the issue in all aspects of the UPR process (for further information email vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org).

The next African states to be reviewed under the UPR process are as follows:

- (1) Session 27 (Apr/May 2017) – [Algeria](#), [Morocco](#), [South Africa](#), [Tunisia](#)
- (2) Session 28 (Oct/Nov 2017) – [Benin](#), [Gabon](#), [Ghana](#), [Zambia](#)

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5. Resources: Research/Reports/Publications

NEW publication from the Global Initiative

[*Ending legalised violence against children: Global progress to December 2016*](#): Marking the 10th anniversary of the presentation of the UN Study on Violence against Children to the UN General Assembly, this report of the Global Initiative and Save the Children Sweden highlights the major achievements of 2016. It recognises that 51 states and six territories worldwide now prohibit all corporal punishment of children and another 55 states have clearly committed to doing so including Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles and Sierra Leone. The report also refers to Africa's Agenda for Children 2040, which was adopted by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 2016 and which recommends elimination of corporal punishment of children by 2040 (Aspiration 7). A limited number of hard copies is available for advocacy use, contact info@endcorporalpunishment.org.

Global resource

[*10 Years on: Global progress & delay in ending violence against children- The rhetoric & the reality \(Report 2016\)*](#): Prepared by the International NGO Council on

Violence Against Children on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the launch of the UN Study on Violence against Children, the report highlight the persistence of violence against children in the world, including in Africa. It recognises that the number of countries that have legally prohibited corporal punishment in the world has tripled since the Study was published (including seven in Africa). However recent data shows that corporal punishment remains widespread worldwide and the 20 states with the highest level of violent punishment are in the Middle East, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. The report contends that the SDGs (especially target 16.2) represent a unique opportunity to intensify efforts in addressing violence against children.

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6. Can you help?

Promoting positive, non-violent discipline

We are collecting resources for the promotion of positive discipline in homes, schools and other settings in Africa for listing on the website.

Contact triona@endcorporalpunishment.org to suggest resources for inclusion.

Resources which promote positive discipline as part of a campaign for law reform or which are clearly linked to prohibition that has already been achieved are especially welcome.

Research on corporal punishment of children

Evidence of the nature and prevalence of corporal punishment gathered through national studies is important to keep the issue visible and to assess the effectiveness of implementation of prohibiting laws and of measures to change attitudes and practice. Please send us any recent research findings relevant to corporal punishment of children in Africa at the following address: vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org.

And ...

Other ways to contribute to the work of the Global Initiative include:

- sending us information on laws prohibiting or authorising corporal punishment

- letting us know about opportunities for promoting law reform (e.g. if draft legislation is being considered) and when new laws are passed which prohibit corporal punishment
- providing contact details for organisations actively working to promote the prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children.

If you can help with any of the above, please email yohito@endcorporalpunishment.org.

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We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful and welcome your comments: please email yohito@endcorporalpunishment.org. If your organisation is not listed as supporting the aims of the Initiative, please consider signing up ([on our website](#) or email info@endcorporalpunishment.org).



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