

Ending Corporal Punishment of Children: Africa E-newsletter

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

In this issue:

Highlights of this issue include news that the South African Department of Basic Education has developed a Protocol for the Elimination of Corporal Punishment in Schools to be implemented across the country, and in Zanzibar, the National Action Plan to End Violence against Women and Children includes services towards positive parenting. Read on for details of regional and national research findings and campaigns towards ending corporal punishment of children across the continent.

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1. Recent developments in Africa

Positive moves

Liberia: Liberia's Assistant Minister for Secondary Education, Felicia Doe-Somah, called on school authorities to end the use of corporal punishment or any punishment that causes physical or moral injury to students. (*The Capitol Times online*, 7 August 2017). *Note:* Corporal punishment is lawful in the home, alternative care settings, day care and schools.

South Africa: The Department of Basic Education has developed a Protocol for the Elimination of Corporal Punishment in South African Schools in response to the continued and widespread use of corporal punishment in schools. The Protocol aims to create a national framework to standardise the education sector's

response to corporal punishment and to facilitate implementation of the prohibition of corporal punishment throughout the Education System. (*News24*, 15 September 2017)

Zanzibar: The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has launched its [National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children 2017 – 2022](#). The Plan identifies family support services as a mechanism for addressing violence against women and children by promoting models of positive parenting for mothers, fathers and other caregivers as an alternative to the use of physical and humiliating punishment. One of the related indicators to be achieved by 2022 is the reduction by 10% of the number of caregivers who believe that physical punishment is an appropriate form of punishment or control in the home and in schools.

Backwards steps

Zambia: The National Action for Quality Education in Zambia called for the reintroduction of corporal punishment at both public and private schools in order to restore discipline among learners, claiming that prohibition of corporal punishment in schools has instilled indiscipline and is affecting teachers' performance. (*Zambia Daily Mail*, 31 August 2017) *Note*: Corporal punishment of children is lawful in the home, alternative care settings and day care; legal provisions for corporal punishment in penal institutions and as a sentence for crime should be formally repealed.

Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe's ruling Zanu-PF party youth leader called on First Lady Grace Mugabe to use corporal punishment against misbehaving children. Kudzanai Chipanga stated that it was Mrs. Mugabe's right to discipline children in every manner possible, "even flogging with a whip". (*News24*, 6 September 2017)

Speaking at a high school event in Rusape, Primary and Secondary Education Deputy Minister Paul Mavhima called on schools and parents to inflict corporal punishment on children as a way of disciplining them. The Deputy minister argued that corporal punishment is needed to ensure children's proper upbringing. (*Daily News*, 21 July 2017)

Prohibition to elimination

Togo: In August 2017, the NGO WAO-Afrique carried out a 2 two-day visit in the Plateaux Region to sensitise parents and teachers on positive discipline. In the towns of Adomi and Elavagnon, WAO-Afrique highlighted the negative effects of corporal punishment and called for the promotion of non-violent relationships

between adults and children. (*djena.info*, 15 August 2017)

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2. Campaigns and other moves towards prohibition

Regional campaign

African Union: During its 29th ordinary session in July 2017, the African Union Assembly adopted [Africa's Agenda for Children 2040: Fostering an Africa fit for Children](#). The Agenda 2040 sets out 10 aspirations to be achieved by 2040. Under aspiration 7, states have committed to ensuring “every child is protected against violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse” and that by 2040, no child is subjected to corporal punishment.

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3. Human rights monitoring

Key decisions and recommendations, etc.

At its 75th session in May/June 2017, the **Committee on the Rights of the Child** remarked on the prevalence of corporal punishment in the family and in schools in [Cameroon](#). The Committee reiterated its 2010 recommendation for explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings and the introduction of public education and awareness-raising programmes.

The **Human Rights Committee** held its 120th session in July 2017. To [Swaziland](#), the Committee welcomed abolition of judicial corporal punishment, expressed concern at its continued legality in all other settings, recommended an end to corporal punishment in all settings, and encouraged awareness-raising campaigns on its harmful effects. A similar recommendation was extended to [Madagascar](#); the Committee also expressed regret that despite the enactment of the Act No. 2007-023 on the Rights and Protection of the Child, prohibition of corporal punishment was not extended to all settings.

At its 18th session in August/September 2017, the **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, recommended the adoption of legislation in [Morocco](#) to ensure that children with disabilities are protected from violence and abuse,

including corporal punishment, and that “perpetrators are sanctioned”.

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).

African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child:

The African Committee will hold its 30th ordinary session in Khartoum, Sudan, in December 2017. The Committee will examine [Algeria](#) and [Sierra Leone](#) (to be confirmed).

Committee on the Rights of the Child:

- (1) Session 78 Pre-Sessional Working Group (Oct 2017). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for [Angola](#) and [Lesotho](#)
- (2) Session 77 (Jan/Feb 2018). The Committee will examine [Seychelles](#)

Committee Against Torture:

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

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women:

- (1) Session 68 (Oct/Nov 2017). The Committee will examine [Burkina Faso](#) and [Kenya](#)

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:

- (1) Session 61 Pre-Sessional Working Group (Oct 2017). The PSWG will adopt the List of Issues for [South Africa](#)
- (2) Session 63 (Mar 2018). The Committee will examine [Central African Republic](#) and [Niger](#)

(3) Session 62 Pre-Sessional Working Group (Apr 2018). The Committee will adopt Lists of Issues for [Cameroon](#) and [Mauritius](#)

Human Rights Committee:

(1) Session 121 (Oct/Nov 2017). The Committee will examine [Cameroon](#), [DR Congo](#) and [Mauritius](#); the Country Report Task Forces will adopt the List of Issues for [Algeria](#) and [The Gambia](#) as a non-reporting state

(2) Session 122 (Mar/Apr 2018). The Committee will examine [Liberia](#); the Country Report Task Forces will adopt Lists of Issues Prior to Reporting for [Botswana](#) and [Tunisia](#)

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 28 (Nov 2017) – [Benin](#), [Gabon](#), [Ghana](#), [Zambia](#)

(2) Session 29 (Jan 2018) – [Botswana](#), [Burundi](#), [Mali](#)

(3) Session 30 (May 2018) – [Burkina Faso](#), [Cabo Verde](#), [Cameroon](#), [Djibouti](#)

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4. Resources: Research/Reports/Publications

NEW publications from the Global Initiative

[*Prohibiting all corporal punishment of children in Africa: an essential step towards fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*](#): Marking the Day of the African Child 2017, commemorated on

the theme “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for Children in Africa: Accelerating protection, empowerment and equal opportunity”, this special briefing highlights prohibition of all corporal punishment of children in Africa as an essential step towards fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (target 16.2) and Africa’s Agenda for Children 2040: Fostering an Africa Fit for Children (aspiration 7).



[Prohibiting all corporal punishment of children: Answers to frequently asked questions:](#)

The Global Initiative and Save the Children Sweden present a series of three booklets, which provide answers to the most frequently asked questions and dispel common misperceptions about the reasons for prohibition of corporal punishment and its impact on families. The first booklet addresses the purpose of a legal ban and particularly what prohibition will mean for parents and family life; the second booklet answers questions in a way that is accessible to children and young people, while the third booklet addresses specific questions on prohibition in schools. The booklets are available now in English, French, Russian and Spanish and will soon be available in Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Chinese, Portuguese and Thai.



Global resource

[Ending Violence in Childhood: Global Report 2017:](#) This final report from Know Violence in Childhood – an independent global learning initiative – examines the causes and consequences of childhood violence and identifies evidence-based

strategies to prevent it. The report highlights the prevalence of corporal punishment across regions, calls for laws banning all corporal punishment of children and states “Violence is not a private matter that should be left to families to resolve, but a matter of human rights that states have a duty to uphold.” It is available in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Arabic.

National resources

South Africa: Jamieson L, Sambu W & Mathews S (2017) [Out of harm's way? Tracking child abuse cases through the child protection system in five selected sites in South Africa](#). Cape Town: Children’s Institute, University of Cape Town. The study finds reports of physical abuse are often regarded as ‘justifiable’ punishment under the guise of discipline, and are accepted as such by services, even when evidence suggested a pattern of violence. It highlights the need for children, care-givers and professionals to take physical abuse, including corporal punishment, seriously and that police in particular should ensure that complaints are investigated and that agencies provide supportive services for all children.

Swaziland: Launched in May 2017, the [National Study on the Drivers of Violence against Children in Swaziland report](#), identifies key drivers linked to increased risk of violence against children. The study was carried out by the University of Edinburgh, in partnership with the University of Swaziland and UNICEF Swaziland, in collaboration with the Deputy Prime Minister’s Office. Using the seven priority strategies of the [INSPIRE framework](#), the study lays out policy recommendations on the implementation and enforcement of laws including a “ban [on] corporal punishment in all settings (long-term)”.

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5. 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 vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org.

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The Global Initiative aims to act as a catalyst to encourage more action and progress towards ending all corporal punishment in all continents. The Africa project aims 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.

We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful and welcome your comments: please email vohito@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).



