



DECADE OF >>> ACTION



**INVESTING IN
CHILDREN**

**An Accelerator for the
Sustainable
Development Goals**

2023



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Contact:

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General
on Violence Against Children

Attn: Permissions

United Nations Office SRSG-VAC

304 45th Street, 17th Floor,

New York, NY, 10017, USA

Connect with us:

-  srsg-vac@un.org
-  violenceagainstchildren.com
-  [UNviolenceagainstchildren](https://www.facebook.com/UNviolenceagainstchildren)
-  [un_violenceagainstchildren](https://www.instagram.com/un_violenceagainstchildren)
-  [UN_EndViolence](https://twitter.com/UN_EndViolence)
-  [un-violence-against-children](https://www.linkedin.com/company/un-violence-against-children)

© Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-
General on Violence Against Children (OSRSG/VAC)

January 2024

Investing in children cannot wait

Too many children are left behind, and violence against them is increasing

More than half of the world's children are exposed to some form of violence every year, and multidimensional and overlapping crises worldwide have exacerbated their vulnerability. A glance at the key facts and figures shows that the scale of violence they face is alarming, and it is on the rise. Yet, violence against children can – and must – be prevented.

246 million girls and boys experience violence in and around schools.¹

Children account for 35% of all identified victims of trafficking.¹⁰

160 million children are engaged in child labour and their numbers are increasing as a result of climate change.^{2,3}

15% of children have reported cyberbullying victimization.¹¹

At least 200 million girls and women alive today have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM).⁴

Around 12 million girls are married during their childhood each year.¹²

Around 1 in 5 adolescent girls have experienced recent intimate partner violence.⁵

Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among those aged 15 to 19 and almost 46,000 children aged 10 to 19 end their own lives each year – about 1 every 11 minutes.¹³

More than 2 in every 3 children are subjected to violent discipline by caregivers.⁶

32 million reports of child sexual abuse images were identified in 2022.¹⁴

More than one million children are deprived of their liberty by law enforcement officials.⁷

1 in 6 children live in areas affected by armed conflict.¹⁵

1 in 6 children live in extreme poverty.¹⁸

43.3 million children had been displaced as of the end of 2022.¹⁶

More than 30% of children with disabilities in 25 countries have experienced violence and they are twice as likely to face neglect and/or sexual, physical or mental abuse as children who have no disabilities.^{8,9}

1 billion children live in areas at high risk of climate crisis.¹⁷

The human and economic cost of violence against children is huge

The impact of violence against children is devastating and long lasting. Violence can induce toxic responses to stress that cause both immediate and long-term physiological and psychological damage. Violence impairs children's brain development, their physical and mental health, and their ability to learn. The consequences include depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, borderline personality disorder, anxiety, substance use disorders, and sleep and eating disorders, as well as suicide. Violence against children is an intergenerational challenge, with the impact often carried into adulthood before being passed down to the next generation.

The cost of this violence is enormous. In addition to the human costs, violence against children also has indirect and long-term economic costs, as it undermines investments in children's health, including mental health, education and other social sectors. Child victims of violence may never reach their full potential in terms of education or health, and this limits their future income and productivity.

Governments also incur the direct costs of the impact of violence against children on the short- and long-term health and well-being of its victims. There are also substantial costs associated with the need for child protection and justice systems to respond, provide rehabilitation to victims and enforce the law against perpetrators. National studies from a range of countries estimate that violence against children has economic costs of up to 5% of GDP.¹⁹ Another estimate shows that violence in and around schools has a severe impact on educational outcomes, and that society pays an estimated \$11 trillion in lost lifetime earnings.²⁰

It is not only possible to prevent violence against children, it also makes economic sense

Ending violence against children would allow governments to use these funds more productively elsewhere. The economic benefits of preventing violence accrue through diverse channels. Existing spending on health, education and social protection, for example, would become more efficient. In addition, the effective prevention of violence against children would strengthen the formation of human capital, resulting in more productive and engaged citizens.

Only six years remain until the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), yet the world is off track on most SDG targets. The close interconnection between the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and children's well-being needs to be made explicit: realizing children's rights, including their right to protection from violence, will help to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

While some SDG targets address specific forms of violence, all 17 SDGs affect the lives of children in one way or another. **Investing in children's protection and well-being is just one part of the efforts that must be made to ensure people-focussed development across the life cycle, with children and families at its core.** An integrated set of services that prioritize violence prevention, address risk factors, strengthen protective factors, and ensure an appropriate response for victims must be fully embedded in national development planning.

During my country visits and engagements with Member States, I have seen many good examples of how governments are increasing investment to end all forms of violence against children. But more needs to be done. These good examples can be shared with others and one way to do this is to ensure their proactive inclusion in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) that are presented each year at the High-level Political Forum. This brief aims to capture some of these, as vital contributions to progress towards the SDGs.



Special Representative of the Secretary-General
on Violence Against Children

I This Brief

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (SRSG-VAC) reached out to all 38 Member States – and one regional organization – that presented Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) at the 2023 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) to offer support to their reporting processes.²¹ This was followed by briefings, where appropriate, to the United Nations Resident Coordinators and Country Teams, as well as UN regional offices.

The SRSG-VAC encouraged the UN system to support a participatory national VNR process and follow-up, using the One UN approach, in line with the Call to Action for Human Rights and Our Common Agenda. She also stressed the interlinkages across the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, emphasizing the importance of increased investment in children, and outlined how such investment could be highlighted in the VNR process, the periodic reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

The SRSG-VAC also participated in regional and national policy dialogues, jointly hosted activities at the high-level moments of the HLPF and the General Assembly, and joined VNR preparation processes, in addition to her country visits.

The Office of the SRSG-VAC undertook a thorough reading of the 2023 VNRs, as well as live presentations during the 2023 HLPF, using a child- and gender-sensitive protection lens.²² This brief explores how investment in a holistic approach to the SDGs can contribute to the prevention of – and response to – violence against children, illustrated with examples from the 2023 VNRs.

These examples are not exhaustive, but they highlight promising practices with the aim of encouraging Member States to enhance overall investment in children and their well-being. The brief also shares other examples that have impressed the SRSG-VAC during her engagements with various stakeholders.

CHILD PROTECTION AND WELL-BEING CROSSES ALL THE SDGS

16



PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS

All SDGs affect the lives of children in one way or another. Children's well-being and protection from violence is a cross-sector agenda and goes beyond SDG 16.2. Achieving the SDGs requires a child- and

gender-sensitive approach to sustainable development that is cross-sectoral and well-coordinated -- creating an eco-system of care and services around children that includes the prevention of, and response to, violence.



SDG targets that directly address violence against children

While some forms of violence against children are addressed in specific SDG targets, the 2030 Agenda also encompasses a much broader set of factors that may put children at risk of violence or help to protect them from it.

4.a A safe and non-violent environment for education	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	
	8.7 Eliminate all forms of child labour	16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL SDGs WILL CREATE SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND EMPOWERING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL CHILDREN

Many factors drive violence against children. They include poverty, lack of access to education, gender inequality, discrimination, insufficient social protection systems, social norms that condone violence, and fragile environments in the aftermath of humanitarian and natural disasters, including those caused by armed conflicts and climate change.

All of these challenges are addressed across the SDGs. Tackling them through the implementation of the SDGs will help to create an effective child-and-gender sensitive protection system. Equally, the full implementation of the SDGs will help to tackle these challenges.



Voluntary National Reviews 2023: Key reflections

Reflections on a participatory process

Member States reported an increasingly participatory approach to the production of their VNRs, highlighting the involvement of a wide range of actors. These included civil society, academia, the private sector, young people and children, participating through workshops, focus groups and standing advisory committees on SDGs.

Member States also noted the support from the United Nations and its agencies in the process of developing their VNRs, including validation workshops with UN Country Teams, consultations with the UN Regional Commissions, and trainings and roundtables organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process has also provided opportunities for all Member States to outline and share examples of actions and good practices to uphold human rights – including the rights of children – in their countries. The 2023 VNRs referenced their UPRs, showing the progress made to address the recommendations from the review.

In addition to the UPR process and regular reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the human rights reporting system, as a whole, is being used by an increasing number of Member States to highlight their progress. In this regard, the endorsement of the Secretary-General's Guidance Note on Child Rights Mainstreaming²³ in July 2023 has presented a further opportunity for the systematic incorporation of children's rights in the context of sustainable development, as well as for support provided to Member States by the United Nations development system.

The building blocks of a child-and-gender sensitive protection system and the Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable social protection



A package of care that encompasses social protection and assistance enhances the protective environment for children, and can include, for example, cash transfers, social insurance, universal health care, and other policies and programmes that are readily available to children and their families. These programmes help to reduce poverty and exclusion, which can be drivers of violence against children in many forms and settings. While poverty itself is not a direct

cause of violence, it can, for example, create stress for families, caregivers, and communities that exacerbates the risk of violence, abuse and exploitation of children, such as child labour, child marriage, trafficking and recruitment into criminal gangs.

In relation to spending on social services, several Member States are currently assessing the cost of violence, although none provide details in their VNRs.

It is also important to note the differences between the well-being of urban and rural populations, with hard-to-reach areas suffering from a lack of basic services and poor rural areas lacking adequate healthcare, nutrition and access to water and sanitation. These issues are particularly relevant for children living in poverty in urban settings, children living and working on the street, and children in rural areas, all of whom can be more vulnerable to certain forms of violence. An integrated approach to social spending and policies was highlighted in the VNRs, including region-wide policy on social programmes for children, and a high-level national economic summit that included a thematic focus on a cross-sectoral approach to human development.

In addition, a number of VNRs emphasized the importance of increased social spending that uses a life-cycle approach, in conjunction with human capital development, with a particular focus on early childhood and children in vulnerable situations.

2023 was notable for the first-ever voluntary review by the European Union. This provides an overview of how EU internal and external actions support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Of particular note is the EU-wide Child Guarantee policy adopted in 2021, which aims to prevent and combat social exclusion by guaranteeing effective and equal access for all children to key services. These include free early childhood education and care, free high-quality and inclusive education, free healthcare, adequate housing, healthy nutrition and physical activity.

Comprehensive and accessible health services



Comprehensive and accessible health services, including mental health and sexual and reproductive health, that are available through a variety of channels, are essential to children's well-being and their protection from violence. Health systems and their personnel also play a key role in the detection and prevention of – and the response to – violence against children.

The VNRs highlighted the importance of access to health care, including the concept of universal health care. They also noted that, despite the increased prevalence of mental health issues during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a general lack of acknowledgement of its impact on children. Increased resourcing for psycho-social support for children was noted, including counselling services that are associated and coordinated with the education system.

The VNRs also noted an interconnection between violence reduction and access to sexual and reproductive health for women, youth, and adolescents. Varied actions include offering counselling and increased access to service centres, and the inclusion of comprehensive sexual education as part of the national curriculum.

Birth registration and documentation



Birth registration is the first recognition of a child's legal existence and identity, and is addressed with a specific SDG target.²⁴ Birth registration and documentation is a critical step in ensuring protection, and is a prerequisite for the exercise of all other rights, including access to services such as health, social protection, education and justice. By providing all children with proof of their legal identity from day one, their rights can be better protected and their universal access to social services can be enabled. For children, having a legal identity can act as a safeguard against child labour, exploitation, trafficking, deprivation of liberty and child marriage.

The importance of legal identity and birth registration was highlighted in the VNRs, with actions including enhanced online registration systems and the opening of mobile or satellite registration offices to increase accessibility, particularly in remote areas. At the same time, various challenges for families were also noted, such as long distances to registration offices and operational issues with the systems used to register their children at birth.

Safe and inclusive education, including digital literacy and online safety



All children have the right to a safe, inclusive and quality education, starting from early childhood. Education provides life-long and intergenerational benefits, not only for the individual but also for the whole of society by enhancing economic growth and equality, as well as social cohesion. Schools can, however, also be the setting for violence, such as bullying, corporal punishment and sexual exploitation and abuse. There is, therefore, a need to ensure a safe and non-violent environment for education. This is addressed with a specific SDG target.²⁵

The VNRs highlighted the importance of safe and inclusive education for all children regardless of their location, socio-economic background or migration status. Actions taken include subsidies that are available to disadvantaged families for school supplies and school meals; offering free compulsory education to all; and making various services available for children with disabilities to ensure their integration in regular classrooms.

Access to information and communication technologies enhances children's learning, social contact and participation and their access to protection. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the need to ensure equitable access to the Internet amid school closures and the subsequent

shift to online learning. At the same time, the digital world can also put children at risk of exploitation and abuse, which harms their health (including mental health), education and development. Universal access to the Internet, which has a specific SDG target²⁶ must come with measures to ensure the safety of all children who are online.

Increased investment was reported in enhancing children's digital skills. While improved infrastructure was reported in the VNRs, such as digital education platforms and greater access to digital equipment for learning, there is, to a large extent, a lack of acknowledgement of the need to address children's online safety, including cyberbullying. Some VNRs reported updates in legal frameworks and regulations, national and region-wide strategies for online safety, and context-specific programmes to address violence online, such as cyberbullying.

Child-friendly justice



Children may come in to contact with the justice system in many ways, including as victims or witnesses of crime, as alleged offenders or as the subject of custody proceedings. Coming into contact with the justice system, however, differs from having access to justice.

Access to justice is the ability to obtain a just and timely remedy for violations of rights. Ensuring equal access to justice is a SDG target²⁷ and it is essential that all children, without discrimination, enjoy equitable access that is child sensitive, empowering and that uses a multi-stakeholder approach.

New and existing legal frameworks to protect children from violence were reported in the VNRs, noting the importance of criminalizing offences against children's right to protection from all forms of violence. The wide prevalence of gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence was also reported. Intimate partner violence not only puts children in danger of experiencing physical violence, but also of witnessing violence, which has significant and negative effects on their well-being.

A variety of actions was reported in VNRs for both victims and/or witness of crimes and for alleged child offenders. For children who are the victims or witnesses of violence, these actions included the provision of expert support; the establishment of special police units that focus on threat management and coordination on intimate partner violence; the establishment of fast-track courts and increased and prompt access to justice; and enhanced tracking and auditing systems to increase accountability when cases of violence against children are reported.

Children who are in detention as alleged offenders often face human rights violations, including violence, harassment and abuse. As a principle, the detention of children should always be the last resort. Actions on this issue highlighted in VNRs included the enactment of a child

justice bill that encourages diversion from criminal courts and ensuring access to education for alleged child offenders, and the reform of juvenile detention institutions to include art-therapy programmes and activities to enhance their social-emotional skills.

In terms of access to reporting mechanisms, there were reports of the victim's right to a complaint – not only to the national authorities, but also to international mechanisms, such as the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Child protection case management with early warning mechanisms



The prevention of violence against children in the first place is the best way to end it. This requires the establishment of integrated case management systems that include early warning and detection, as well as effective referral services to reach all children, particularly the most vulnerable. Children who are living in poverty, in street situations, on the move, without documentation, without parental care, or with disabilities need to be protected by a system that has multi-sectoral referral pathways, including 'one stop' service centres. For the system to work, different sectors, including health, education, child protection and welfare need to work together in an integrated manner.

One VNR highlighted a multi-sectoral national framework to support children and their families in preventing and responding to violence, encompassing legal services, health services (including mental health and psychological support), social welfare and education. A VNR noted the establishment of support centres that offer a suite of services to child victims of violence. Another reported a hospital-based electronic registry for child maltreatment cases as a critical source of data that enables a concerted effort to respond to child abuse and neglect.

The provision of child hotlines was also highlighted in VNRs. These are accessible by telephone, text or online, making it possible to report cases of violence against children and seek support and referral services, with the emphasis on the accessibility of services for those living in rural and hard-to-reach areas. One VNR reported on the integration of online platforms with in-person service centres.

Strengthened protective social norms and community empowerment



Safe, nurturing and caring relationships and environments throughout childhood are essential for the creation of the human capital needed to build safe, peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

Communities around the world possess many positive and protective norms that align with child well-being. Enhancing these positive social norms encourages behaviours that help to prevent violence against children and can be achieved through the mobilization of a wide range of stakeholders, including policy makers, community leaders, religious and faith leaders, educators, parents and caregivers.

Strategies to change attitudes and social norms are most effective at the community or small-group level, particularly when combined with other elements such as legislation or life-skills training. Grassroots communities around the world, including religious and faith-based organizations, play a key role in this regard.

Effective violence prevention strategies often highlight the need to change negative social norms, such as the acceptance of child marriage because it is seen a way to escape poverty or not reporting violence because of a fear of stigma and shame. VNRs noted the need to change harmful social norms as a part of efforts to prevent and respond to violence, particularly against women and girls. They recognized that addressing intimate partner violence requires comprehensive efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. These efforts will also challenge societal norms that perpetuate violence while strengthening existing positive social norms, such as a culture of peace and non-violence, to prevent violence.

Parenting and family support, including positive and non-violent discipline



Families and communities are the first line of defence for the protection of children from violence. At the same time, they can also be places where violence against children occurs. To support parents, caregivers and families in their protective roles, integrated services, including support for positive parenting and non-violent discipline, need to be available alongside other social and health services.

Support programmes for families were highlighted in the VNRs through actions such as family visits that yielded positive results in reducing parenting stress and improving children's social emotional state; as well as an education programme for mothers on nurturing their children's mental, physical and emotional skills.

In addition, VNRs noted the increased vulnerability of children without parental care and the importance of moving away from institutional care for such children to a family environment that is reinforced by strong support services.

The increased involvement of parents in school communities was noted as a way to prevent violence, including sexual violence and bullying in schools. In this regard, an awareness-raising campaign was reported for parents about the protection of children from sexual violence.

Children's participation and involvement



The achievement of the SDGs requires the inclusive participation and partnership of children at local, national, regional and global levels. In line with their evolving capacity, children's engagement in decision-making processes²⁸ helps to strengthen protection, prevention, and the response to violence. Their meaningful participation as 'agents of change'²⁹ for positive and peaceful development not only empowers each individual child, but also an entire generation, and enhances their sense of belonging as global citizens.

Safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces are essential to nurture children's participation. When children engage in civic activities with their peers and adult counterparts, it helps to deepen societal perceptions and understanding of children's rights, creates an environment that is conducive to speaking up, and mobilizes redress for the injustices suffered by children and their peers.

The participation of children and young people in the development of VNRs was highlighted, including focus group discussions, polls and surveys, and their participation in municipal legislative bodies through, for example, affiliated children's councils. In some cases, children wrote and designed a parallel report or contributed a chapter for incorporation into the national report.

The activism of children and young people for the achievement of the SDGs was also highlighted, noting their volunteer activities, such as beach clean-ups, waste-collecting and tree-planting. Some VNRs reported actions related to education and health programmes.

Children's participation in national decision-making processes was also noted through programmes such as a children's parliament, national dialogues and engagement in young people's councils.

Young people (usually over the age of 18) are also taking part in international policy-making as members of their national UN delegations to the HLPF and General Assembly, signifying the importance of the continuum of participation.

The SRSG-VAC notes that children are not always mentioned explicitly in VNRs: terms such as youth and young people are sometimes used interchangeably to mean persons below the age of 18. It is important that VNRs recognize that the situation of children, including in relation to violence, is qualitatively different to that of youth.

In conclusion

There is growing political commitment to end violence against children. However, while action is being taken, much of it is still taking place in silos. **A paradigm shift is needed. What is missing is robust and sustained investment to build an integrated set of social services around children and families – a protective shield against violence. Investment that tackles the root causes and drivers of violence will, in turn, serve as an accelerator for the achievement of the SDGs.**

Less than six years remain until the deadline for the achievement of the SDGs, and the world is not on track to keep the promise made by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to end all forms of violence against children.

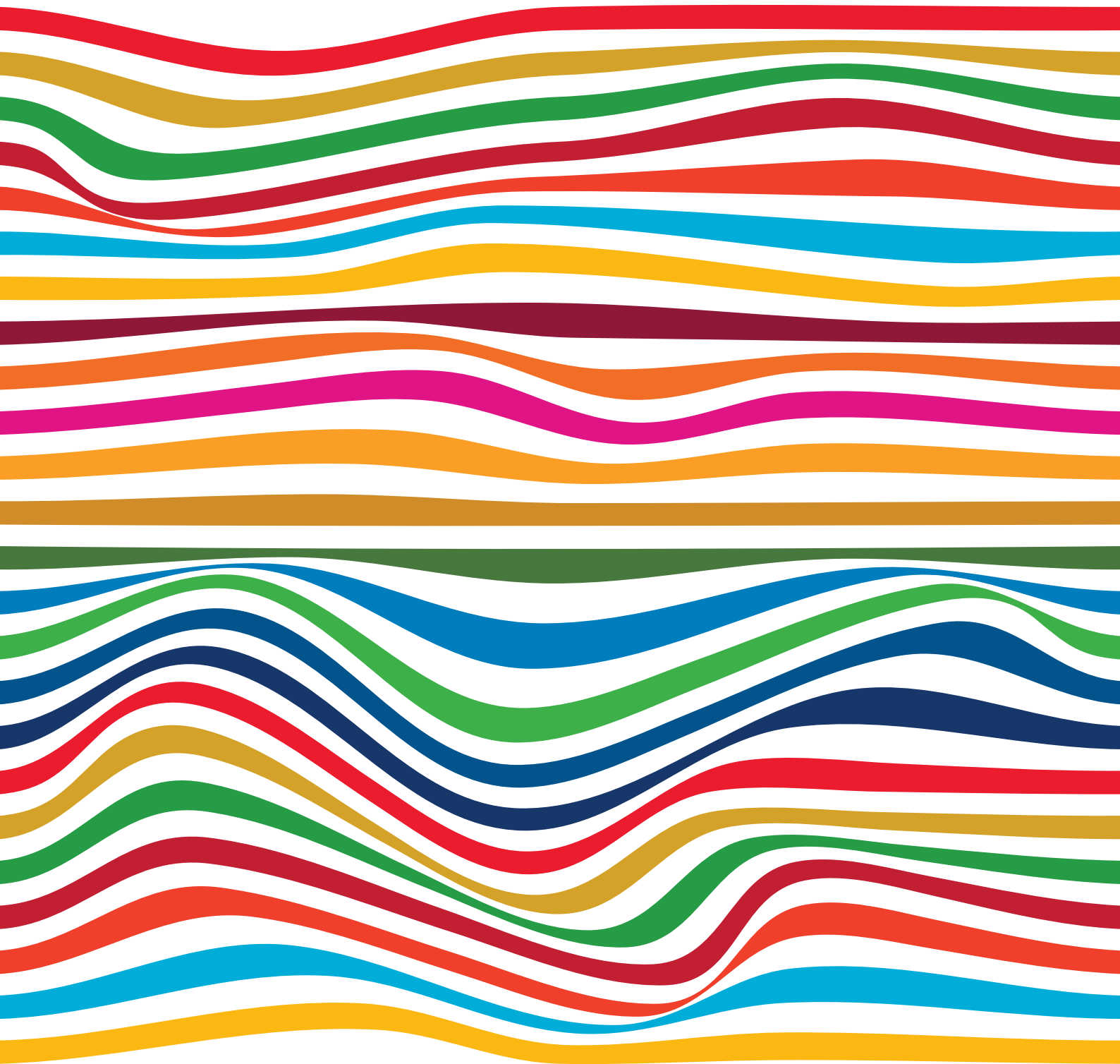
Governments increasingly recognize that investing in children through integrated social services, including for the elimination of violence against children, makes sound economic sense. They are drawing on the results of studies that measure the cost of violence against children at the national level, and projecting the return on investment in violence prevention. These evidence-based initiatives should be encouraged and their experience shared widely.

The Special Representative on Violence against Children will continue to support and connect Member States that are making progress – and becoming champions for children – so that they learn from one another, creating a community of practice. As more Member States adopt this approach it will help to shift the mode of cooperation towards context-specific mutual partnerships that foster south-south, north-south and triangular cooperation.

In 2024, the Mandate of the SRSG-VAC commemorates 15 years of work with and for children through the encouragement of increased investment in children and their well-being. The Special Representative looks forward to engaging with more Member States on this crucial issue.

Endnotes

1. See <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246970>
2. See <https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-labour-2020-global-estimates-trends-and-the-road-forward/>
3. Climate change is multiplying the incidence of child labour, particularly in agriculture where 70% of all child labour is found (https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_905673/lang--en/index.htm)
4. See <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/female-genital-mutilation/>
5. See <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/violent-unions/>
6. See UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty United Nations Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty | OHCHR, A/75/183: Report on ending immigration detention of children and seeking adequate reception and care for them | OHCHR
7. See <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/violent-discipline/#:~:text=In%20a%20majority%20of%20countries,of%20violence%20experienced%20by%20children>
8. See [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642\(22\)00033-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(22)00033-5)
9. See [www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642\(22\)00033-5/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(22)00033-5/fulltext)
10. See www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022/GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf, and <https://publications.iom.int/books/global-estimates-modern-slavery-forced-labour-and-forced-marriage>.
11. See www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240062085
12. See <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage/>
13. See www.unicef.org/reports/state-worlds-children-2021
14. See www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240062085
15. See www.ohchr.org/en/speeches/2022/07/children-affected-armed-conflict-and-violence
16. See <https://www.unicef.org/media/147931/file/The%20climage-changed%20child%20-%20Report%20in%20English.pdf>
17. See www.unicef.org/media/105376/file/UNICEF-climate-crisis-child-rights-crisis.pdf
18. See <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-bearing-brunt-stalled-progress-extreme-poverty-reduction-worldwide>
19. See <https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/news/violence-prevention-dividend-why-preventing-violence-against-children-makes-economic-sense>
20. See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/08/03/violence-in-schools-leads-to-11-trillion-in-lost-lifetime-earnings>
21. The 38 UN Member States that presented VNRs were: Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Comoros, Chile, Croatia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Fiji, France, Guyana, Iceland, Ireland, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Maldives, Mongolia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, St Kitts & Nevis, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zambia. The European Union presented a regional report.
22. See the OSRSG-VAC 2022 VNR Brief for more on how the risks, drivers and protective factors of violence relate to the 17 goals of the SDGs: https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/2030_agenda/seeing_the_sustainable_development_goals_and_voluntary_national_reviews_through_a_child_protection_lens_2022.pdf
23. See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/guidance-note-secretary-general-child-rights-mainstreaming>
24. SDG Target 16.9: Provide a legal identity for all, including birth registration.
25. SDG Target 4.a: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.
26. SDG Target 9c: Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet.
27. SDG Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.
28. SDG Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making.
29. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Preamble para. 51.



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN