



**THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE PREVENTION OF
VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**



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

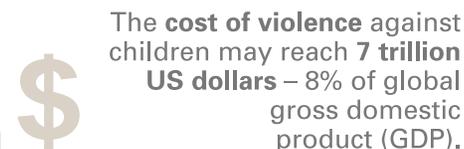
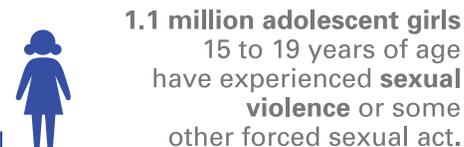
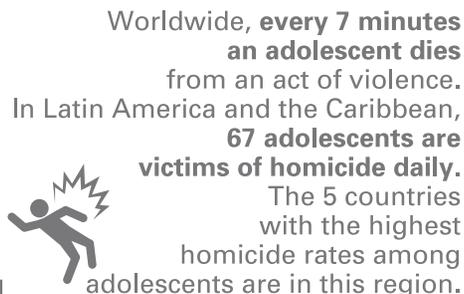
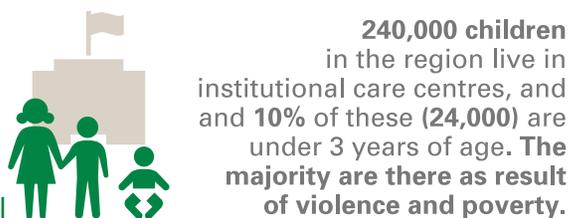
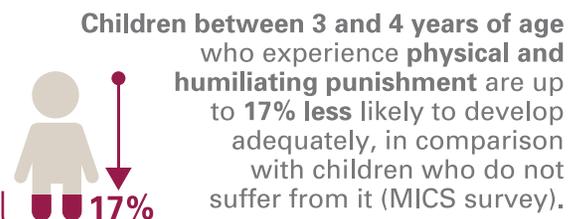
unicef  for every child

Recent evidence indicates that violence against children can be prevented and eliminated. In addition to being a shared responsibility, the prevention of violence against children yields a high return on investment for individuals, businesses and countries. Work on this issue has been widely supported through close collaboration between UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, with significant measures adopted at the national level. However, these efforts must continue today because the lives of too many children in Latin America and the Caribbean are marked by fear and pain.

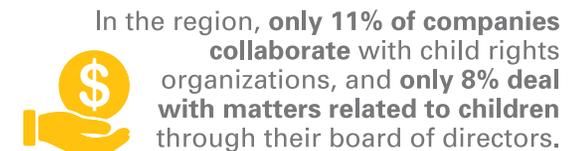
What is the situation of violence against children in Latin America and the Caribbean?

Important policies and legal reform processes have been promoted in Latin America and the Caribbean to end violence against children. Currently, ten countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela have legislation prohibiting all forms of violence against children and adolescents, including physical and humiliating punishment in the home and family, and many others have a plan of action for the prevention and protection of children against violence. Yet, persistent challenges remain.

Data on violence against children in Latin America and the Caribbean



Source: Global Child Forum, Overseas Development Institute with Child Fund Alliance, UNICEF.



Why is the prevention of violence against children important for the private sector?

1. Because it is a shared responsibility:

International commitments underline the role of the private sector in this agenda:

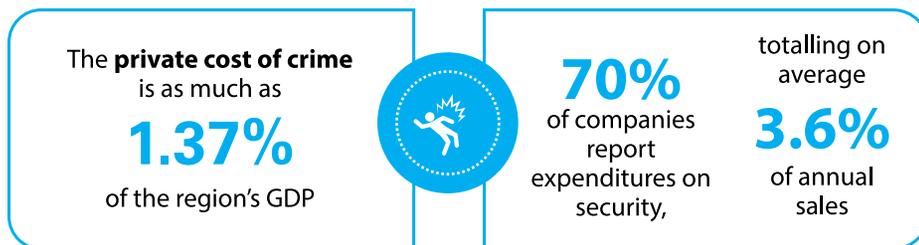
- a The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) 
- b The United Nations Study on Violence Against Children (2006) 
- c Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011) 
- d Children's Rights and Business Principles (2012) 

2. Because companies impact children and families:

Companies are leaders in innovation and employ parents and child caregivers, sell products and services, influence government policies and are the production base of the national and family economy in Latin America and the Caribbean.



3. Because of its high social and economic cost:



Source: Inter-American Development Bank.

This current situation of violence and crime can be improved by investing in the prevention of violence against children to end the intergenerational cycles that perpetuate individual, family and social violence.

4. Because it is key for sustainability:

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** recognises that companies have a crucial role to play in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Companies need **inclusive, tolerant and peaceful societies and a healthy labour force** for them to grow sustainably.



What can companies do?



Companies can:

Train their employees and suppliers to expand circles of protection from violence against children.

● **This includes:** Carrying out initiatives to inform parents and caregivers on how to educate without violence and requiring suppliers to show zero tolerance for any situation of violence against children.

Work in partnership with governments to create innovative initiatives for the protection of children and collaborate with communities to transform attitudes that permit and tolerate violence.

● **This includes:** Supporting and reinforcing measures and legislation adopted by governments to safeguard children's rights.

Use their influence to strengthen efforts to prevent and respond to violence against children.

● **This includes:** Working with other companies and partners supporting sensitisation initiatives, mobilisation campaigns and legal reform processes to consolidate the legal prohibition of violence against children.

Provide information services to children and adolescents with whom they interact in simple, age-appropriate and accessible language, taking into account situations of disability, language, etc.

● **This includes:** Informing children and adolescents about the mechanisms that exist for counselling and for reporting incidents of violence.



© UNICEF/UN036806/Torgovnik/Verbatim Photo Agency

PERÚ

The Peruvian Soccer Federation (FPF) supports the protection of children and adolescents in sports

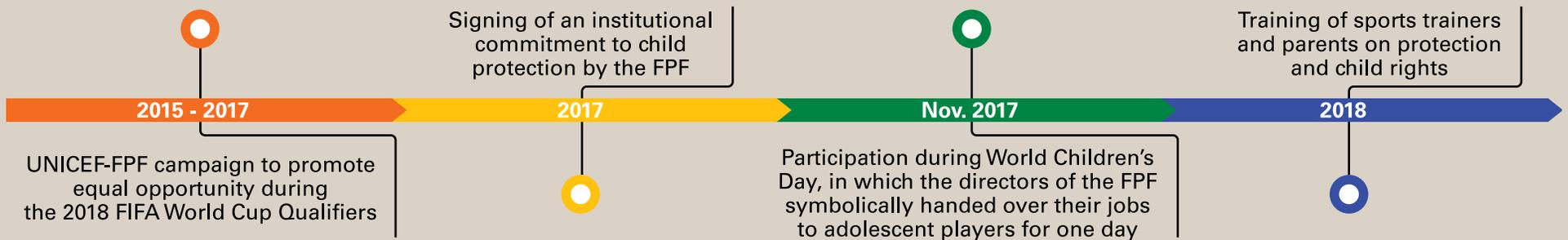
Topic: Integrated protection of children and adolescents in sports

In 2015, the FPF adopted the Plan Centenario 2022, which included a section dedicated to strengthening children's selection teams. This plan includes the creation of Development Centres in all regions of the country to decentralise the sport and to invest in children and adolescents nationwide. UNICEF Peru contacted the FPF and they agreed to join efforts to promote messages in favour of children during national team matches, such as the campaign for equal opportunity and for greater and better investment in children.

In August 2017, after two years of collaboration, an agreement was signed under which the FPF committed to working with UNICEF to promote children's rights. The FPF is educating its trainers and young soccer players on the prevention of violence, creating grievance mechanisms, documenting their practices, and reporting annually on 17 indicators on education, health, participation and protection throughout the country. In addition, the parents and caregivers of the young athletes must sign a commitment to protect the rights of their children at home.



© UNICEF Perú/Vilca



RESULTS

EXTERNAL

- More than 50,000 children, adolescents and families reached by the FPF through tournaments and regional selection teams.
- Potential to reach 200,000 children and their families through the *Plan Centenario 2022*.
- More than 80,000 people sensitized on child rights during the Qualifier games for the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

CORPORATE

- 26 Development Centres created nation-wide to recruit and support the selected players
- Commitment with UNICEF signed by the highest level of the FPF.
- Kick-start training modules for football coaches and parents on the rights of children.

EL SALVADOR

The "League" model in El Salvador



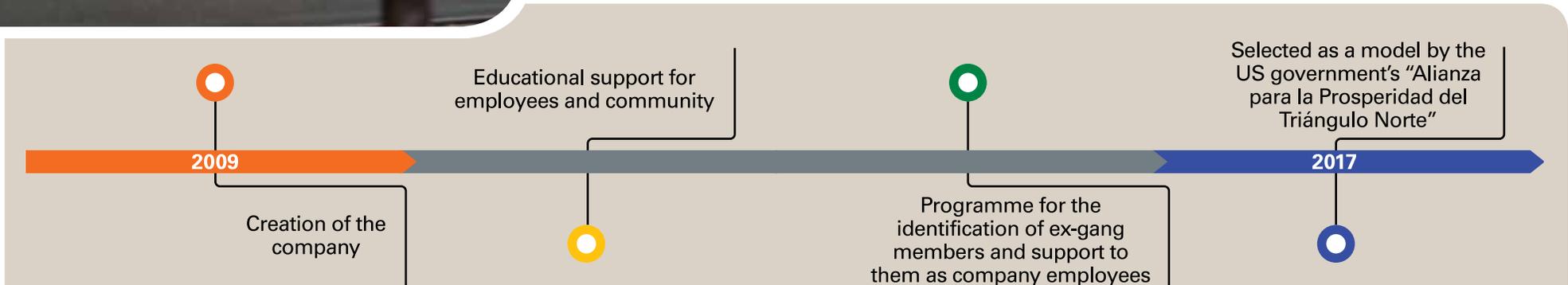
© UNICEF/UN1186320/Heger

Topic: Social and labour reintegration of young ex-gang members

League Central America is a manufacturing company that specialises in producing articles of clothing for universities and institutes in the United States.

From its creation, it adopted a policy of educational and social inclusion. On one hand, it sought to both expand access to education for children in the community where it operates and to support the technical and university education of its employees.

On the other hand, it employs young former gang members and provides them with training opportunities, support and follow-up for their personal and professional growth.



RESULTS

EXTERNAL

- Direct impact on 630 families and 1,890 children.
- Creation of an Integral Development Centre in the industrial park where the company operates.
- 0% dropout rate in the schools supported in its area of influence over eight years.

CORPORATE

- 500 employees, out of which 8% are young people who were involved with gangs.
- 15% dropout rate, far below the industrial average (45%).
- Received an award from the United States Embassy in El Salvador and the FIRST Award for Responsible Capitalism (based in England).

PARAGUAY

Visión Banco: against physical and humiliating punishment in families

Topic: Elimination of physical and humiliating punishment

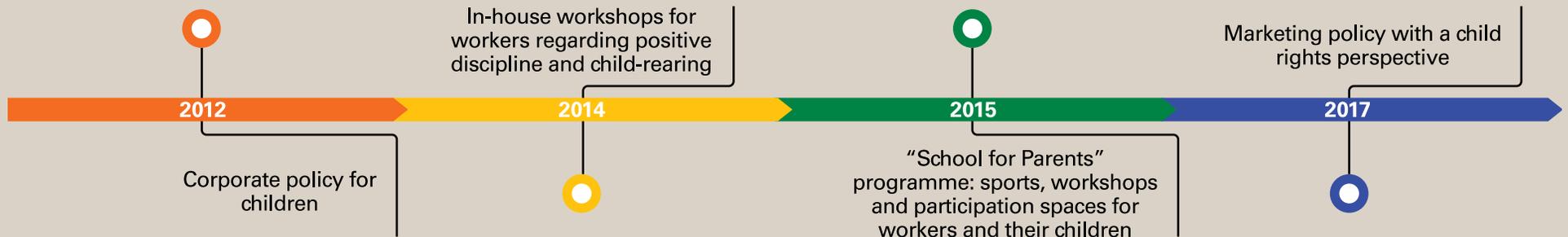
Visión Banco is a Paraguayan financial entity that since 2012 has included the “Child Rights and Business Principles” in its policies and corporate management, positioning itself as a reference regarding the promotion of the rights of children.

In the context of its policy for children, it has installed nine breastfeeding locations for mothers and has created a system of special leave to promote positive child-rearing among its workers.

The company promotes the use of positive discipline and child participation through its “School for Parents” programme amongst its workers, which includes training and coaching activities related to positive child-rearing for parents and adults responsible for childcare.



© UNICEF/UN0126824/Heger



RESULTS

EXTERNAL

- 370 children of workers have benefited since 2012.
- 150 workers trained in child-rearing without violence.

CORPORATE

- Recognised over five years as a “child-friendly company” by NGO Global Infancia.
- 5/5 score on the GIIRS Impact Rated assessment in the community category (international indicator of investment funds).
- Paternal and maternal leave system beyond what is required by law.

COLOMBIA

“La Muralla Soy Yo”: the tourism sector against sexual exploitation

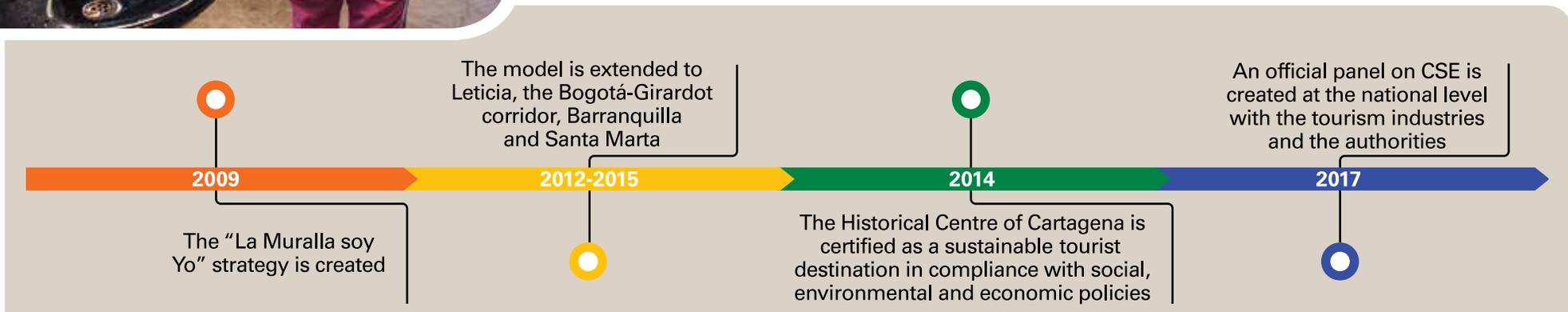
Topic: Sexual exploitation of children and adolescents

In 2009, the crime of child sexual exploitation (CSE) had worsened in the city of Cartagena de Indias, which led to the adoption of laws against child sexual exploitation. In this context, the Corporación Turismo, UNICEF and the Fundación Renacer – ECPAT Colombia created the “La Muralla Soy Yo” (I Am the Wall) mobilisation and advocacy strategy to protect children in the Cartagena hotel industry.

It sought to include and train all business actors – hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, etc. – and the entire value chain in the tourism sector, as well as informal vendors, academics, education institutions, the authorities and communication media. All were empowered and created joint actions to generate social impact. It became a strategy that has been replicated in various cities of the country to create protective environments for children for the prevention, detection, reporting and eradication of sexual exploitation.



© UNICEF/UN013308/LaMoyné



RESULTS

EXTERNAL

- More than 3,000 children trained in the prevention of CSE through a youth network.
- 113 tourism and hotel companies are members of The Code against sexual exploitation in Colombia.
- More than 1,300 parents and community leaders, more than 26 journalists and more than 400 public servants sensitized and trained in the prevention of CSE.

CORPORATE

- Recognised as a successful case at the global level by UNICEF and FairTrade Tourism.
- COTELCO (Colombia Tourism Corporation) includes the prevention of CSE in its annual action plan, with budget allocation.
- 2,637 workers trained regarding the prevention of CSE at work in diverse tourism companies.

NORTHERN CENTRAL AMERICA

Millicom-TIGO: helplines in Northern Central America

Topic: Mechanisms for reporting incidents of violence

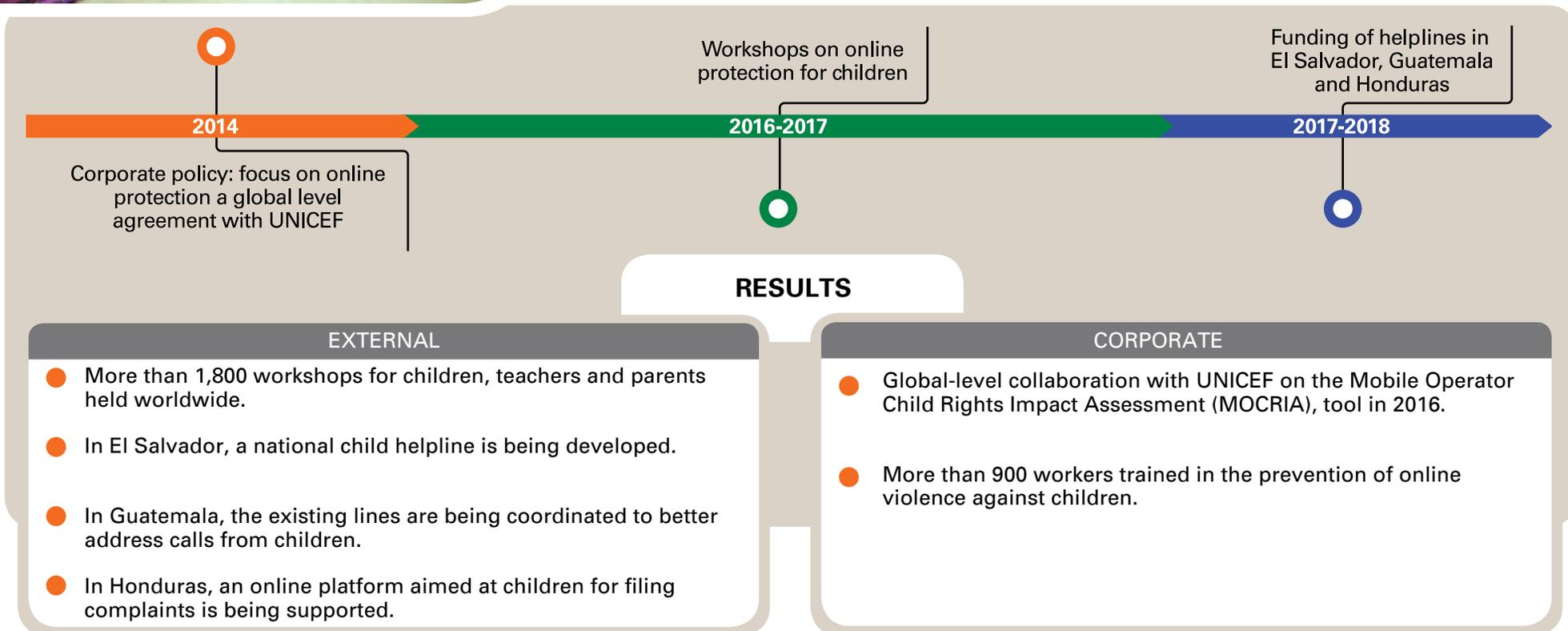
The telecommunications company Millicom, which operates in Latin America under the commercial brand Tigo in eight countries of the region, seeks to promote child protection both on and off line.

It has collaborated with UNICEF on multiple initiatives world-wide, such as drafting guidelines and recommendations for the mobile phone industry. In Latin America, Tigo holds workshops on the prevention of online violence led by its own workers in schools and institutions.

Since 2017, the company has supported the creation of helplines in El Salvador, Guatemala y Honduras. These helplines for children and adolescents will allow a safe channel for reporting cases of domestic, school or community violence, in addition to offering the millions of children in these countries a line they can use to receive emotional support when they need it.



© UNICEF El Salvador/MMartinez



Children's Rights and Business Principles

The Children's Rights and Business Principles developed in 2012 by UNICEF, the United Nations Global Compact and Save the Children, guide companies on what they can do to respect and promote children's rights throughout their business practices.



How can my company apply these Principles?

All companies, whatever their classification, have the ability to be agents of change for children, and to this end they can take the following actions:

- 1** Prevent, monitor and respond to potential incidents of abuse, exploitation and other forms of violence against children, whether in the workplace, in the messages for the promotion of their products, or in the community where the company operates and in the framework of their collaboration with the governments of the countries where they operate.
- 2** Adopt a corporate commitment, translated into corporate policies and codes of conduct, to prevent and respond to violence against children.
- 3** Include the child rights perspective in corporate operations, procedures and practices.
- 4** Establish transparent mechanisms for monitoring and accountability, and assess the impact of their operations on the lives of children and adolescents.

This publication was developed by the Private Fundraising and Partnerships section (Stefan Stefansson and Marcelo Ber) and the Child Protection section (Ana Catalina Fernández and José Bergua) from UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office, together with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (Cecilia Anicama).

This publication was coordinated by Cecilia Anicama and Francisco Biber.

UNICEF Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean: Marita Perceval

Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children: Marta Santos Pais.

For more information, contact:
UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean
Marcelo Ber, mber@unicef.org
Francisco Biber, fbiber@unicef.org

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children
Cecilia Anicama, canicama@un.org

Or visit:
www.unicef.org/lac
www.violenceagainstchildren.un.org
and follow @srsgvac on Twitter.

Cover photo: © UNICEF El Salvador/2007-461/Bell

Sources used in this document:
Publications and official data of the Global Initiative to end all corporal punishment of children, the Global Child Forum, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations and UNICEF.



unicef  | for every child

United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF
Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office
Building 102, Alberto Tejada St., City of Knowledge
Panama, Republic of Panama
PO Box 0843-03054
Telephone: +507 301 7400
www.unicef.org/lac
Twitter: @uniceflac
Facebook: /uniceflac