

Ending violence against children grossly underfunded within the framework of international cooperation

New report shows only a small fraction of official development assistance goes toward ending violence against children

May 24, 2017 -- For the first time, a review of official development assistance (ODA) to end violence against children has been done. The report *Counting Pennies* found that in 2015, total ODA spending was \$174 billion and of that, less than 0.6 per cent was allocated to ending violence against children.

"While commending states' commitment to end violence against children, it is deeply worrying that less than US\$1.1 billion of ODA is estimated to be spent addressing this critical human rights concern," said Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children.

Violence compromises children's development, health and education and has a high cost for society – up to US\$7 trillion a year, worldwide. Because of this, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development now includes a distinct global target to end all forms of violence against children (target 16.2). Ending the abuse, neglect and exploitation of children is also mainstreamed across other parts of this international development agenda.

"Children's lives are at stake and the serious consequences of violence can last a lifetime," Santos Pais added. "While governments' policy priorities may have competing demands on scarce resources, the social and financial costs of inaction are too high."

Civil society partners that collaborated on this report were World Vision International, SOS Children's Villages, Save the Children and ChildFund Alliance. The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence Against Children and UNICEF also contributed to the research.

"Violence against children undermines all aid and development activities. Partnerships, like the one backing this report, are vital in addressing an issue of this magnitude," said Trihadi Saptoadi, Vice Chair, Executive Committee for Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children and World Vision Global Leader for Impact and Engagement. "An end to violence against children is within reach and we will see the greatest impact by working together."

The report also found that half of all ODA to end violence against children goes to two geographic regions: Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Countries affected by conflict and displacement, such as Iraq, Syria and South Sudan, receive the bulk of these investments. Yet, funding to address violence against children in these areas is still lacking.

The study recommends for donors to improve tracking of spending to determine how international development assistance is contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development targets to end violence against children. The report also calls for further research into the amount of domestic resources invested by recipient governments.

“The world’s agreed priority to ending violence against children needs to be matched by increased ODA investment and by tracking spending on preventing and addressing violence against children,” said Santos Pais. “This must happen through both official development assistance and through the mobilization of domestic resources.”

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