

Comments on draft SDSN report *Indicators for Sustainable Development Goals*

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#	OVERARCHING COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT TEXT
1	<p>This submission from the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (www.endcorporalpunishment.org) calls for the inclusion of prohibition and elimination of violent punishment of children, as a fundamental right and an essential element of a human rights-based approach to development, in the indicators for sustainable development goals. Violent punishment of children, in the family home and other settings of their lives, is the most common form of violence against children, and clear baselines for measuring progress towards its prohibition and elimination have been developed, including through UNICEF’s Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) on the prevalence of violent punishment of children.¹</p> <p>Ending corporal punishment is an essential part of Goal 4, “Achieve Gender Equality, Social Inclusion, and Human Rights”. Prohibition of corporal punishment is a well-established human rights imperative. In its General Comment No. 8 (2006) on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment, the Committee on the Rights of the Child made it very clear that all states parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are required to prohibit and eliminate all corporal punishment of children, in the family home and all other settings of their lives, and it consistently recommends prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment to states it examines. The Human Rights Committee, the Committee Against Torture, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women have all recommended prohibition of all corporal punishment of children. The issue has been extensively covered in the Universal Periodic Review of states’ overall human rights records. In this context, there is growing progress towards prohibition: as at March 2014, 36 states have prohibited corporal punishment in all settings and a further 47 have made public commitments to doing so. A table summarizing the legal status of corporal punishment of children in all states is provided alongside this comment form.</p> <p>As the Committee on the Rights of the Child has said, ending corporal punishment is “a key strategy for reducing and preventing all forms of violence in societies”.² There is overwhelming evidence</p>

¹ UNICEF (2014), *The State of the World’s Children 2014 in Numbers: Every Child Counts*, NY: UNICEF

² Committee on the Rights of the Child (2006), *General Comment No. 8: The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment (arts. 19; 28, para. 2; and 37, inter alia)*, para. 3

	<p>that violent punishment of children is associated with increased aggression and involvement in criminal behaviour in children and adults.³ Violent punishment of children is closely linked to other forms of family violence, including intimate partner violence: the two kinds of violence often coexist⁴ and experience of corporal punishment as a child is associated with an increased risk of involvement in intimate partner violence as an adult as both perpetrator and victim. Efforts to end corporal punishment – this damaging and most common form of violence against children – are essential in building peaceful, non-violent societies, including preventing violent crime.</p> <p>Prohibition of corporal punishment is also important for Goal 5, “Achieve Health and Wellbeing at all Ages”. Corporal punishment is associated with poor mental and physical health outcomes for children and adults. Ending the legality and practice of corporal punishment of children is recognized by major international health professionals’ organisations as a key strategy to improve the physical and mental health and other developmental outcomes for children and adults. In 2013, nine major international health organisations issued a statement calling for all governments to work for the prohibition and elimination of all corporal punishment and all organisations working for health to include the issue in their work. The statement, together with a summary of research which documents the negative impact of corporal punishment on the health of children and adults, is provided alongside this comment form.</p> <p>Ending corporal punishment in schools, day care and other education settings is essential for Goal 3, “Ensure Effective Learning for All Children and Youth for Life and Livelihood”. As well as violating children’s right to respect for their physical integrity and human dignity, corporal punishment in schools and other education settings violates children’s right to education. Yet violent punishment remains lawful in schools in 76 states worldwide, and in day care (such as early childhood development programs) in 156 states. Further detail is available in the table of the legality of corporal punishment provided alongside this comment form.</p>
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COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC SECTIONS		
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³ Gershoff, E. T. (2002), “Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review”, *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(4), 539-579

⁴ Lansford, J. E. et al (2014), “Attitudes Justifying Domestic Violence Predict Endorsement of Corporal Punishment and Physical and Psychological Aggression towards Children: A Study in 25 Low- and Middle-Income Countries”, *The Journal of Pediatrics*, published online 9 January 2014

