

# Ending Corporal Punishment of Children: Africa E-newsletter

Issue 19: June 2015

FRENCH VERSION ALSO AVAILABLE



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

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## In this issue:

We are pleased to announce the launch of our new website ([www.endcorporalpunishment.org](http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org)), which features up to date information on global progress toward ending corporal punishment of children in all settings. The website includes information relevant to the African context, e.g. African treaty bodies, as well as recent research and campaigns across the continent. Please do refresh your browser when you first visit!

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## 1. Who we are

The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) which aims to act as a catalyst to encourage more action and progress towards ending all corporal punishment in all continents. We support national campaigns with relevant information and assistance ([www.endcorporalpunishment.org](http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org)). The Africa project of the Global Initiative aims specifically 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. For more information, please contact Sonia Vohito at: [vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org).

Through this newsletter we aim to keep civil society organisations and other stakeholders informed and encourage networking around the issue of corporal punishment of children. We encourage readers to forward the newsletter to whoever might be interested and we encourage organisations **to sign up to support prohibition of corporal punishment at [www.endcorporalpunishment.org](http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org)**.

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## 2. Recent developments in Africa

*Zimbabwe:* The Constitutional Court has provisionally suspended a High Court order outlawing the caning of juveniles as a form of punishment (see issue no. 18). Chief Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku decided that while the case awaited hearing by the nine judges, magistrates could impose corporal punishment on juvenile offenders. The Chief Justice noted that: “The court observes from submissions made by all the parties that there is an agreement [in support of corporal punishment]. The court will be happier if it will hear some opposing views before making a determination.” (*Zimeye*, 18 June 2015)

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## 3. Campaigns and other moves towards prohibition

*Parenting in Africa:* During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pan African *Conference on parenting*, which was held in Kampala, Uganda on 21-22 April 2015 under the theme “Promoting Positive Discipline through Skilful Parenting in Childhood and Adolescence (including Children with Disabilities)”, participants adopted the [Munyonyo Declaration and Call to Action](#) in which they called for legal reform to end corporal punishment of children in all settings. They called upon the United Nations, the African Union and governments to “advocate for the implementation of the CRC/ACRWC and other key legislation banning physical punishment in various settings and policies supporting parents”. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Pan African Conference on parenting gathered over 105 delegates from 13 African countries and aimed to empower families and promote skilful parenting practices, as well as promote partnerships for

comprehensive, sustainable, and effective social protection of Africa's children.

**Swaziland:** As part of the celebrations of the Month of the Child, [World Vision](#) held a discussion with pastors in a campaign to end violence against children. The campaign seeks to raise awareness on corporal punishment as violence against children and further reach agreement on a common message from the church on corporal punishment, while also identifying opportunities for church partnership to end violence against children. World Vision Swaziland met religious leaders from various denominations in order to raise the issue of corporal punishment of children. (*Swazi Observer*, 12 June 2015)

**Uganda:** In May, the Catholic Church through the Uganda Xaverian Movement organised a two day National Action campaign under the theme: "Stopping Interpersonal Violence to enable children and youngsters live and grow in a healthy environment." During this event, His Eminence Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala expressed concern about high levels of domestic violence in families. Cardinal Wamala asked the youth to individually pledged that they would refrain from violent acts and also teach others including parents to refrain from use of violence and instead opt for dialogue as the best solution to solving problems. (*New Vision*, 21 June 2015).

**Note:** In Uganda, corporal punishment is unlawful in the penal system but it is not prohibited by law in the home, alternative care settings, day care and schools; a Bill which would prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings, including the home, is currently under discussion.

### **Positive discipline**

**Ghana:** In April 2015, in Ho, ActionAid Ghana held a workshop on positive discipline for media practitioners and personnel from the Ghana Education Service. During the workshop, Mrs She- Vera Azangra ActionAid's Volta and Greater Accra Regional Coordinator, called on parents and teachers to replace corporal punishment with positive discipline. She stressed that parents and teachers using corporal punishment were violating children's human rights. Mrs She- Vera Azangra also called on the Ministry of Education to adopt modern concepts, which would not be harmful to the upbringing and training of school children. (*The Chronicle*, 16 April 2015)

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## 4. Human rights monitoring

The 25<sup>th</sup> session of the [African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child](#) was held in April 2015, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. During the session, the Committee examined the state party reports of [Madagascar](#), [Namibia](#), [Rwanda](#) and [Zimbabwe](#). The Committee raised the issue of the legality of corporal punishment of children with each state examined. Its recommendations to states will be published shortly.

### Key decisions and recommendations, etc

The 69th session of the [Committee on the Rights of the Child](#) was held in May/June 2015, including review of prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment in relation to the states being examined under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings including repeal of legal defences for its use, such as a “right of correction” or similar, were made to [Eritrea](#), [Ethiopia](#) and [Ghana](#).

The 22nd session of the [Universal Periodic Review](#) was held in May 2015. Recommendations to prohibit all corporal punishment of children were made to [Liberia](#) and [Libya](#).

### 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](mailto:vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org).

**Please note that the [individual country reports](#) on the new website include information on upcoming treaty body and UPR reviews and deadlines for briefing.** We are always willing to advise NGOs and human rights institutions on the practical details of how to submit briefings (email [vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org)).

### *Committee on the Rights of the Child*

(1) Session 71 (11-29 Jan 2016). The Committee will be examining [Benin](#), [Gabon](#), [Kenya](#), [Senegal](#), [Zambia](#) and [Zimbabwe](#).

(2) Session 73 Pre-Sessional Working Group (1-5 Feb 2016). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for [Central African Republic](#), [Malawi](#), [Sierra Leone](#) and [South Africa](#).

#### *Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*

(1) Session 56 (21 Sep – 9 Oct 2015). The Committee will examine [Burundi](#), [Morocco](#) and [Sudan](#).

(2) Session 57 (22 Feb – 4 Mar 2016). The Committee will examine [Kenya](#) and [Namibia](#).

#### *Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

(1) Session 14 (17 Aug – 4 Sep 2015). The Committee will examine [Gabon](#), [Kenya](#) and [Mauritius](#).

#### *Human Rights Committee*

(1) Session 115 (19 Oct – 6 Nov 2015). The Committee will examine [Benin](#), and adopt Lists of Issues for [Burkina Faso](#) and [Ghana](#).

### **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 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 [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org)).

**For deadlines for briefing see the [country reports on the new website](#).**

Session 23 (2-13 Nov 2015): [Mauritania](#), [Rwanda](#), [Sao Tome and Principe](#)

Session 24 (Jan/Feb 2016): [Mozambique](#), [Namibia](#), [Niger](#), [Seychelles](#), [Sierra Leone](#), [Somalia](#)

Session 25 (Apr/May 2016): [Sudan](#), [Swaziland](#), [United Republic of Tanzania](#)

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## 5. Resources: Research/Reports/Publications

The Global Initiative is delighted to announce the launch of our [new website](#). Come and visit our new and improved site where, as always, you can find up to date information on progress towards universal prohibition of all corporal punishment of children, guidance on advocacy for law reform and detailed reports on every country, as well as the latest news, research summaries and advocacy resources. In particular, our [individual country reports](#) now include links to national campaigns for law reform and information on upcoming treaty body and UPR examinations, including deadlines for briefing. Please note that users of the previous website may need to **refresh their browser** in order to view the new site.

### \*NEW PUBLICATIONS TO SUPPORT CAMPAIGNING\*

#### **New summary of faith support for prohibition worldwide**

This new briefing, entitled *Faith-based support for prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children – a global overview*, has been prepared by the Churches' Network for Non-violence. It provides examples of multi-religious support in Africa and other regions, including the Cairo Declaration on the Convention (CRC) and Islamic Jurisprudence, the Fatwa against corporal punishment (Mauritania), and the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference statements. With extracts from key statements and links to further information, the summary is a key tool in addressing the faith-based elements of promoting prohibition and elimination of all corporal punishment of children.

The leaflet is available as a pdf [here](#). For further information, email [chris@churchesfornon-violence.org](mailto:chris@churchesfornon-violence.org). For information on all aspects of working with and within faith communities to promote prohibition, see <http://churchesfornon-violence.org/>.

#### **New global report on prohibiting corporal punishment in schools**

This new report by the Global Initiative, published jointly with Save the Children, charts progress towards prohibition of corporal punishment in schools and identifies the states where progress is not being made. The report sets out the human rights standards relating to prohibition of corporal punishment, summarises research documenting the continued use of corporal punishment in schools and together with extracts from national legislation authorising corporal punishment as well as from laws prohibiting it, describes how laws can be reformed to achieve

abolition. It identifies immediate opportunities for law reform in at least 22 of the 29 African states where prohibition has not yet been fully achieved in schools, the report is both a call to action to end violent punishment of children in all places of learning and a tool for advocacy to make this happen through law reform and other measures. *Towards non-violent schools: prohibiting all corporal punishment, Global report 2015* – published in English and in Spanish and launched at the 6th World Congress on School Violence and Public Policies in Lima, Peru, May 2015 – is available [here](#).

## Other resources

*Middle East & North Africa: A [Regional report on out of school children: Middle East & North Africa](#)* published by the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), revealed that 21 million children and adolescents in the Middle East and North Africa are either out of school or risks dropping out. The report recommends prohibition of corporal punishments in schools, at home and in all other settings as a necessary foundation for efforts to improve school climate, ensure school retention and combat education exclusion. The report concerns seven African countries: Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia. Using the Global Initiative's data, the report includes an overview of prohibition of corporal punishment in school in MENA. It calls for an improved climate "where corporal punishment is prohibited in law and in practice". The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Report is part of the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), launched by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in 2010. ([Regional Report on out-of-school children: Middle East and North Africa](#), Out-of-School children Initiative, UNICEF MENA Regional Office, 2015)

*Algeria:* A study conducted by the Algerian League for Human Rights (LADDH) revealed that 3 million of Algerian families use corporal punishment in childrearing. The study carried out by sociologists showed that mothers are the primary perpetrators (36%), while fathers represent 26%. Other perpetrators of corporal punishment are siblings and grandparents (14%). (*Algerie-focus.com*, 9 May 2015)

*South Africa:* Launched in May 2015, the 2014 [General Household Survey](#) (GHS) report revealed that corporal punishment of school children is still prevalent in Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal as both provinces recorded with the highest national rate of 21%. In the Free State, school children experienced corporal punishment at 11%, 12% in Limpopo, 11% in Northern Cape, and 10% in North West. The Western Cape recorded the lowest figure at 2.8%. The GHS report

measures the performance of programmes as well as the quality of service delivery in a number of key service sectors in South Africa, including education, health and social development and housing.

New research published by the Institute of Security Studies (ISS) and the University of Cape Town (UCT) entitled [“Positive parenting in South Africa: why supporting families is key to development and violence prevention”](#) shows that parenting impacts on children’s behaviour, which affects their ability to realise their potential. The research found that children who were subjected to corporal punishment, whose parents were stressed and who suffered from mental health problems (such as depression) were more likely than other children to be anxious and depressed or act violently and aggressively. The report recommends inter-departmental collaboration and strong partnerships between governmental stakeholders, including the departments of social development and health, and civil society to develop plans to make evidence-based programmes available to parents nationally.

**Note:** The South African Children’s Amendment Bill has recently been officially tabled. Unfortunately, the tabled version of the Children’s Amendment Bill does not include prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings.

*Uganda:* An innovative programme of activities used in Ugandan primary schools has succeeded in reducing violence by teachers against children by 42%, according to new research published in *The Lancet Global Health*. The Good School Toolkit is a behavioural intervention designed by Ugandan NGO [Raising Voices](#), which aims to foster change in operational culture at the school level. Its materials include t-shirts, books, booklets, posters and guides for around 60 different activities. To evaluate the Toolkit’s effectiveness, researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, in partnership with Raising Voices, conducted a randomised controlled trial (RCT) in the Luwero District of Uganda. The trial took place from September 2012 to April 2014 with 21 schools in the intervention arm and 21 in the control arm. Despite large reductions seen in the study, levels of [physical violence](#) in the intervention schools remained high, with 30% and 60% of students reporting violence in the past week and past term respectively. (Devries K M et al. [“The Good School Toolkit for reducing physical violence form school staff to primary school students: a cluster- randomised controlled trial in Uganda”](#), *The Lancet Global Health*, Volume 3, July 2015)

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## 6. 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](mailto: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 any recent research findings relevant to corporal punishment of children in Africa to [vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto: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](mailto:vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org).

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We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful and welcome your comments: please email [vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:vohito@endcorporalpunishment.org). We are sending the newsletter to supporters of the aims of the Global Initiative and others who we

think will be interested. If you do not want to receive future editions, please tell us at [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org). If your organisation is not listed as supporting the aims of the Initiative, please consider signing up ([online](#) or email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org)).

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