

AUTHORS OF THE CHILD-FRIENDLY KIDSRIGHTS INDEX REPORT 2023:  
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# KIDSRIGHTS

## CHILD-FRIENDLY VERSION

# INDEX 2023

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KIDSRIGHTS  
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# WHO ARE WE?

The KidsRights Foundation is an international children's rights, aid and advocacy organization based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. We were setup in 2003 with the belief that all children are changemakers and that they have the power to move the world.

## BACKGROUND

KidsRights Index ranks countries around the world based on how they respect and protect the rights of children. These rights are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – All the countries in the world (except USA) have promised to provide all basic needs and requirements to children so that they can live a good life.

**Sources of data:** UNICEF (the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), UNDP (The United Nations Development Programme) and Concluding Observations of UNCRC (The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child).

**Concluding Observations of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child:** This Committee tries to make sure that all countries are keeping their promise to provide a good life to children. Concluding Observations are comments and recommendations of the Committee. They provide guidance to countries to fulfil their promise to protect and respect rights of children.

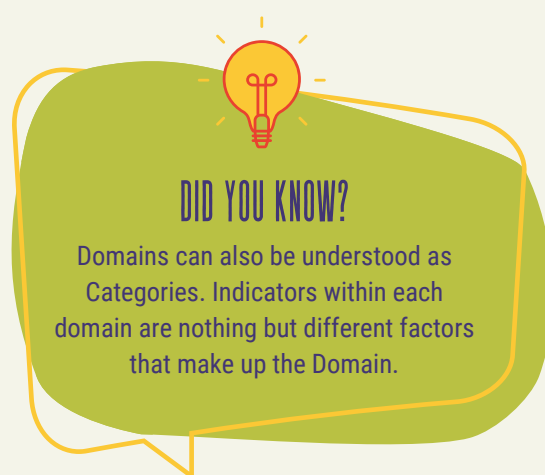
KidsRights Index has 5 parts, also referred to as Domains.

These are:

1. Life
2. Health
3. Education
4. Protection; and
5. Enabling Environment for Children's Rights

Every Domain comprises of several indicators that combine to get an average score for a Domain. The definitions of the Domains and their respective indicators are provided in the Glossary. Whenever you want to learn more about a Domain or indicator, you can read the "Glossary of Terms" at the end of this document.

*N.B: It is important to know the definitions of each Domain and their indicators to understand on what basis the KidsRights Index rank countries.*



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# 1. THE CONTEXT OF INDEX- POLYCRISIS



Elliot is a student who is starting their final year examinations. On the way to their exam, they had to take a longer route because their regular route was under construction. It then started raining heavily and Elliot had to walk through water-clogged roads and heavy traffic. Unable to reach the school on time, Elliot missed the examination and is now worried that they might not be able to get the promotion to next class.

In the above example, we see how multiple problems or crises all at once increases the challenges. These multiple problems all at once makes it harder to recover from their negative impacts. This phenomenon is similar to what we call 'Polycrisis'.

Sadly, our world has experienced many difficulties in the recent years and many people, including children, had to deal with various challenges. One of these has been the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic brought a lot of problems for the children for ex. Lack of medicine and healthcare services, closing of schools leading to missing out on education, becoming poor because of loss of job of parents etc. Going forward we will try to tell you about the various events that have affected our world recently leading to polycrisis.

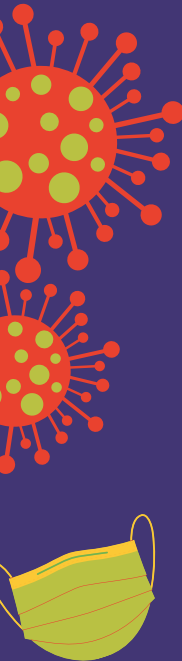
Ukraine has faced war in the past year. Sadly, many children have had to leave their home to live in other countries for their own safety. The war in Ukraine has also increased the price of food, which makes it difficult for families to have enough food for their children. The war means that children in Ukraine are vulnerable and need to be particularly taken care of to make sure that they are safe, healthy and can continue to go to school.

There has also been a lot of heavy rain and flooding in Pakistan and earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye which affected millions of children and families. Like in Ukraine, when situations like this occur, children must leave their home to seek safety elsewhere. It also means that children's rights are not always protected as it is difficult to make sure that children continue going to school and receive proper care.

Leaders in Afghanistan made the decision to ban girls from attending school, there are complex reasons for this. This ban prevents girls from learning and growing. It is every child's right to get an education and thankfully people around the world are working to help girls in Afghanistan go to school.

Recently, there has also been conflict in Sudan. As children in Sudan already suffer from a lack of access to food this conflict made the situation for children much worse. Now more children need food and again, are being forced to leave their homes for their own safety.

As you can see, sadly many problems have occurred over the past year. **These children need special attention and care to make sure that their rights are protected and that they can be safe, healthy, and happy.**



# 2. RESULTS IN INDEX 2023- HOW ARE THE COUNTRIES DOING?

KRI 2023 maps 193 countries (Holy See, USA and Niue are not included because enough data is not available)

## 2.1 OVERALL RANKINGS

The overall ranking of a country is the final rank of the country based on all 5 domains – Life, Health, Education, Protection and Enabling Environment. In the 2023 KidsRights Index, Sweden ranks first. It took the place of Iceland which was ranked first for the last 4 years.






| RANK | COUNTRY  | SCORE |
|------|--|-------|
| ▲ 1  |  SWEDEN       | 0.913 |
| ▲ 2  |  ICELAND     | 0.908 |
| ▲ 3  |  FINLAND    | 0.907 |
| ▲ 4  |  LUXEMBOURG | 0.903 |
| ▲ 5  |  GERMANY    | 0.898 |

Table 1: Overall highest scoring five countries in the 2023 KidsRights Index






| RANK  | COUNTRY   | SCORE |
|-------|---|-------|
| ▼ 193 |  CHAD                       | 0.197 |
| ▼ 192 |  SOUTH SUDAN               | 0.201 |
| ▼ 191 |  AFGHANISTAN              | 0.202 |
| ▼ 190 |  CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC | 0.264 |
| ▼ 189 |  SIERRA LEONE             | 0.270 |

Table 2: Overall lowest scoring five countries in the 2023 KidsRights Index

The complete rankings and rankings per domain are available at:

<https://www.kidsrights.org/research/kidsrights-index/>



# 2.2 DOMAIN-WISE ANALYSIS

## 2.2.1 DOMAIN 1: LIFE

Domain 'Life' shows the quality of life that children are expected to live in their countries. It has three parts: expected life expectancy, under 5 mortality rates, and maternal mortality rate.

**Monaco** is the best performer in the Domain Life. It means that children living in Monaco will live a good life. The top five best performers in this Domain are presented below, in Table 3.











| LIFE RANK<br>IN KIDSRIGHTS<br>INDEX 11 (2023) | COUNTRY   | TOTAL RANK<br>IN KIDSRIGHTS INDEX<br>11 (2023) |
|---|---|--|
| ▲ 1   |  MONACO        | 17   |
| ▲ 2   |  JAPAN         | 23   |
| ▲ 3   |  AUSTRALIA    | 136  |
| ▲ 4   |  SWITZERLAND | 30   |
| ▲ 5   |  NORWAY      | 9  |

Table 3: Top five countries in the Domain Life in the 2023 KidsRights Index

▼
65

CUBA

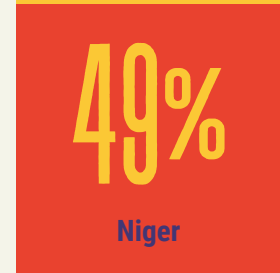
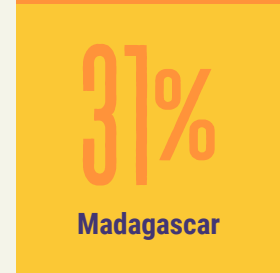
2022
2023

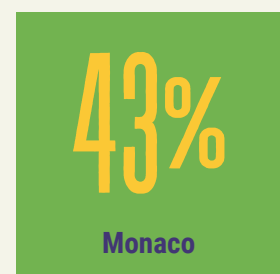
77.6 years
73.7 years

Cuba holds the 65th position (-25) for the Domain Life. Life expectancy reduced in Cuba from 77.6 years to 73.7 years.

Percentage increase in deaths of children under 5 years of age



Percentage decrease in deaths of children under 5 years of age



## 2.2.2 DOMAIN 2: HEALTH

Domain 'Health' shows the status of healthcare-related conditions for children in their countries. It has four parts: immunization, underweight children, and percentage of children who have access to sanitation and drinking water facilities.



**Andorra** is the best performer in the Domain Health, which means that children living in Andorra have good Healthcare conditions.






| HEALTH RANK<br>IN KIDSRIGHTS<br>INDEX 11 (2023) | COUNTRY   | TOTAL RANK<br>IN KIDSRIGHTS INDEX<br>11 (2023) |
|---|---|--|
| ▲ 1   |  <b>ANDORRA</b>      | 31   |
| ▲ 2   |  <b>BAHRAIN</b>      | 32   |
| ▲ 3   |  <b>COOK ISLANDS</b> | 77   |
| ▲ 4   |  <b>ISRAEL</b>      | 62   |
| ▲ 5   |  <b>QATAR</b>      | 22   |

Table 4: Top five countries in the Domain Health in the 2023 KidsRights Index

### NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF COVID-19

- Non-covid vaccines not available
- Fear of using vaccines

**-20%** LESS IMMUNIZED CHILDREN

Countries such as the **Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Montenegro, Djibouti, and Ecuador** recorded around 20 percent reduction in this Domain.

**Madagascar (-34%), Vanuatu (-36%), Myanmar (-52%) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (-58%)** showed higher reductions in immunized children.

 **INCREASE IN VACCINES**

Some countries such as **Suriname (+29%), El Salvador, Gabon, and Lesotho (+20%)** saw an increase in the number of children who received their vaccines.

**+81%**  
increase in the number of underweight children in **Tuvalu**

In Democratic People's Republic of Korea  
**500,000 CHILDREN**  
are at risk of diseases that can be **prevented by taking vaccines.**

**1,000,000 CHILDREN**  
in Myanmar did not get their regular vaccines.

## 2.2.3 DOMAIN 3: EDUCATION

Domain 'Education' shows the condition of the education system in all the countries. It has three parts: Expected years of schooling for boys, Expected years of schooling for girls, and Gender Inequality.

**Australia** is the best performer in the Domain Education, which means that children in Australia are expected to be in the education system for a good amount of time.



### EDUCATION RANK

IN KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 11 (2023)

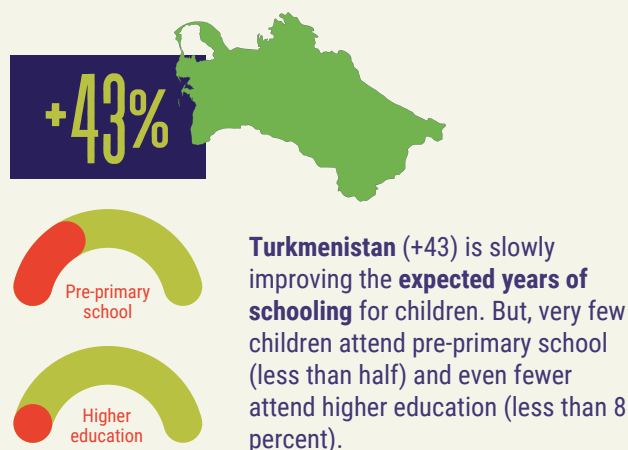
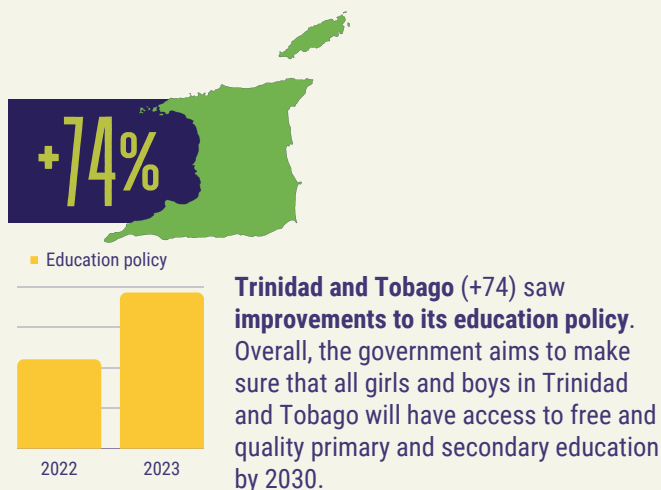
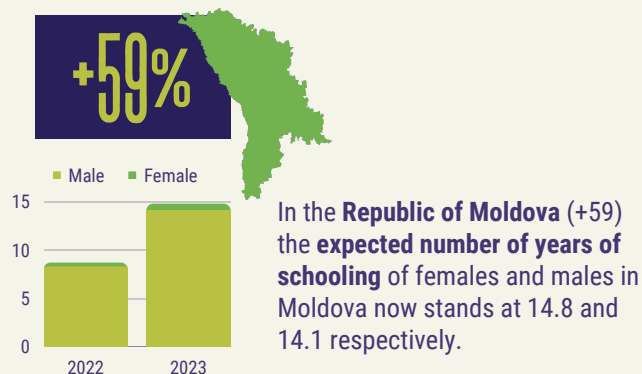
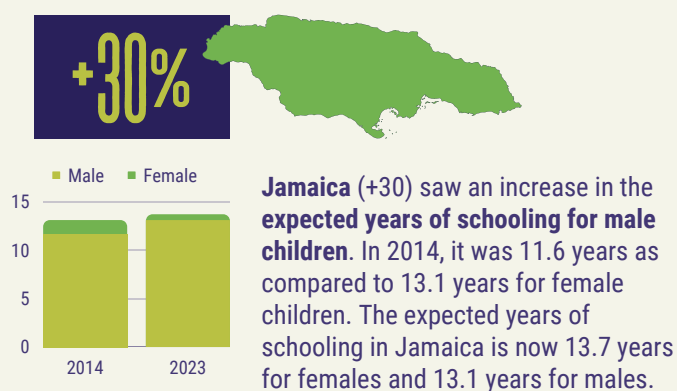
COUNTRY

### TOTAL RANK

IN KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 11 (2023)

|     |   |     |
|-----|---|-----|
| ▲ 1 |  AUSTRALIA | 136 |
| ▲ 2 |  BELGIUM   | 18  |
| ▲ 3 |  DENMARK   | 7   |
| ▲ 4 |  FINLAND   | 2   |
| ▲ 5 |  GREECE   | 6   |

Table 5: Top five countries in the Domain Education in the 2023 KidsRights Index



## 2.2.4 DOMAIN 4: PROTECTION

The Domain 'Protection' shows how well children are protected in their countries. It has three parts: Child Labour, Adolescent Birth Rate, Birth Registration.



In the 2023 KidsRights Index, **Switzerland** does best on the Domain Protection, which means that children living in Switzerland have a good level of basis protection.






| PROTECTION RANK<br>IN KIDSRIGHTS<br>INDEX 11 (2023) | COUNTRY   | TOTAL RANK<br>IN KIDSRIGHTS INDEX<br>11 (2023) |
|---|---|--|
| ▲ 1   |  SWITZERLAND     | 30   |
| ▲ 2   |  DENMARK         | 7  |
| ▲ 3   |  THE NETHERLANDS | 20   |
| ▲ 4   |  NORWAY         | 9  |
| ▲ 5   |  SINGAPORE     | 33   |

Table 6: Top five countries in the Domain Protection in the 2023 KidsRights Index

### Countries with an increase in children at work –



### Countries with a decrease in children at work –



## 2.2.5 DOMAIN 5: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The Domain 'Enabling Environment' shows us if a specific country has a healthy space and environment for effective promotion of all children's rights. It comprises of seven indicators- non-discrimination, best interest of the child, respect for the views of the child, enabling legislation, best available budget, collection and analysis of the disaggregated data, and state-civil society cooperation.



Countries that improved their overall rank:



GREECE  
KUWAIT  
UKRAINE  
UZBEKISTAN

Countries that have the same overall rank:



GERMANY

Countries that fell in their overall rank:



CAMBODIA  
CANADA  
CHILE  
CROATIA  
CUBA  
CYPRUS  
DJIBOUTI  
ICELAND  
KIRIBATI  
MADAGASCAR  
THE NETHERLANDS  
NORTH MACEDONIA  
THE PHILIPPINES  
VIETNAM  
ZAMBIA

Countries that were reviewed for the first time:



SOMALIA  
SOUTH SUDAN

# 2.3 INTEGRATING CLIMATE CHANGE INTO THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX: A FIRST PROGRESS REPORT

Humans have warmed up the climate by burning coal and oil, which put too many gases into the air and traps heat in the sky (Climate Change). Because of this, children in different countries face a lot of problems. The KidsRights Team is trying to add 'Climate Change' to the KidsRights Index. It shows how much children in different countries are affected because of climate change.

The data is collected from UNICEF's report 'Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI)'. The data is available only for 163 countries. In the KidsRights Index, the ranks of the countries in 'Climate Change' Domain show how much children are exposed to climate change problems in their countries. Bangladesh, China and India are the countries where children are at the highest risk of climate change.

## **Changes Brought About in the KidsRights Index Results by the Inclusion of a Climate Change Domain**

When scores of 'climate change' Domain are added to KidsRights Index, we see some interesting changes. Some countries fall in their overall ranks and other countries improve. The lowest scoring countries on the KidsRights Index Plus Climate would be South Sudan, Afghanistan, and Chad. The highest scoring countries would be Iceland, Luxembourg, and Finland.

### Positive changes



### Negative changes



## 2.3.1 REGIONAL COMPARISON

The average overall **KidsRights Index Plus Climate Change** score is:

**0.605**



Regions with higher average than the Global Average:

- **Western Europe** (0.785)
- **Eastern Europe and Central Asia** (0.701),
- **the Middle East and North Africa** (0.646),
- **Latin America and Caribbean** (0.639)

Regions with lower average than the Global Average:

- **Eastern and Southern Africa** (0.490),
- **West and Central Africa** (0.401),
- **East Asia and Pacific** (0.555),
- **South Asia** (0.434)

In the Children's Climate Risk Index Report, the Asian region has been the most impacted due to climate and environmental hazards, followed by the African region, Latin America, and the Caribbean.



## 3. CONCLUSION

In this report we have talked about how children's lives are affected because of many crisis – 'polycrisis'. This has negatively impacted the performance of several countries in one or more Domains. The good news that comes with 2023 KidsRights Index is that we were able to include more countries, reaching up to 193 countries this year as compared to 185 last year. We were also able to learn about how climate change affects children and the performance of the countries in the Index.

**KidsRights will keep up the efforts to continuously gather data and find out about situation of children's rights in every country around the world. We want to keep everyone informed about it, including children.**

# GLOSSARY

## DEFINITIONS OF DOMAINS AND INDICATORS

### Domain 1: Life

In the Life domain we find out the quality and standard of life that children have in their countries and how long they will live for.

- **Under 5 mortality rate**

Sadly, not every child makes it to their 5th birthday. Some children get sick and cannot access healthcare. Some children face other problems which make it difficult for them to live. The under 5 mortality rate helps us to find out how many children do not reach their 5th birthday.

- **Life expectancy at birth**

Life expectancy shows us how many years a child is expected to live for once they are born.

- **Maternal mortality ratio**

When a woman is pregnant with a baby, sometimes there can be problems that makes it difficult for the mother to survive pregnancy or childbirth. The maternal mortality ratio helps us to find out how many mothers could be at risk of facing these problems.

### Domain 2: Health

In the Health domain we find out how healthy children are in their countries. This helps us to understand how healthcare can be improved and how we can help children in these countries to be healthier.

- **Underweight**

Children come in all shapes and sizes, that's because all our bodies grow differently. A child is considered underweight if they are lighter in weight than the standard weight for their age and height. When a child is underweight, it may be because they do not have access to proper food or nutrition to keep their bodies strong.

- **Immunization**

For babies to grow healthy and strong they need to be protected against diseases that could make them sick, such as measles. Therefore, children receive vaccines. Think of them as superpowers that will help you fight the diseases and make sure you are still strong and healthy. Sadly, not every child gets their vaccine on time. Immunization data shows how many children in a country have received their vaccines.

- **Use of improved drinking water sources**

Having clean drinking water is important for children to stay healthy and strong. This can include drinking from a public tap, water from a well or collecting rainwater. With this indicator we can find out how many children in any country have safe drinking water.

- **Use of improved sanitation facilities:**

As human beings we all need the bathroom to keep ourselves clean and do our 'business'. Unfortunately, not every child has these facilities, for example - sometimes they have to defecate in open areas which is unsafe and can make people sick. The rate of sanitation facilities shows us how many children have access to good washing, hygiene and cleaning which helps them to stay healthy.

### Domain 3: Education

Every child deserves to go to school and complete their primary and secondary education. In the Education Domain we learn and find out how many years on average boys and girls spend in school and if there is any difference between the number of years that boys and girls will spend in school in their countries.

- **Expected years of schooling for girls :**

While all girls should go to school, some girls face challenges which makes it difficult for them to enroll in school or they have to leave school before they finish. The expected years of schooling for girls shows how many years a girl will usually spend in school in a country. For our world to become a better place, all girls need to finish their education so they can reach their full potential.

- **Expected years of schooling of boys:**

All boys like girls deserve to go to school and complete their primary and secondary education. Boys also face challenges which makes it difficult for them to enroll in school or they have to leave school. The expected years of schooling for boys helps us see how long boys will go to school on average. It is important that boys as well as girls get to finish their education so they can make the world a better place.

- **Gender inequality in expected years of schooling:**

Gender inequality means that boys and girls are not treated the same due to difference in the opportunities available for them due to various reasons for ex. discrimination. In some countries, boys will attend school for more years than girls, and in other countries it might be the opposite where girls attend school longer than boys. The gender inequality in expected years of schooling shows the difference between the expected years of schooling of boys and girls.

## Domain 4: Protection

In the protection domain we find out how many children in each country are protected. We find this out by learning how many children work instead of going to school, how many young girls become mothers and how many children are officially registered when they are born.

- **Child Labour:**

When children are forced to work as adults instead of attending school or having their play time, this is known as child labour. This can be forced on children due to reasons like poverty, illiteracy, and even crimes. We use child labour indicator to find out how many children take part in labour while risking their rights like education, health, and play.

- **Adolescent birth rate:**

Getting pregnant at an early age in life before attaining adulthood has negative impact on girl's health, education, and protection of life. When girls get pregnant during their adolescence it's called 'Adolescent birth'. This happens due to various reasons like child marriages, lack of sex education, and even crimes. The adolescent birth rate shows us how many girls aged between 15 and 19 years old have a baby.

- **Birth registration:**

When a baby is born, they need to be registered with a country to establish an identity. Parents need to give information such as the baby's name, the parent's name, and where they were born. This is called 'birth registration'. It is important for everyone to be registered so that they can get a birth certificate and access to government services later in life. This indicator helps us find out how many children upon birth are registered before the age of 5.

## Domain 5 : Enabling Environment For Child Rights

Every child has rights that help them live a safe, happy and healthy life. An enabling environment makes sure that everything around children allows them to enjoy their rights.

- **Non-discrimination**

No matter their gender, race, religion or abilities, all children deserve to be treated equally and fairly. This is what we call 'non-discrimination'. If children are treated differently and unfairly, it can prevent them from having opportunities such as education. Therefore it's important that all children are treated equally so everyone can have opportunities.

- **Best interests of the child**

You know how parents and grown-ups want what's best for you? The best interest of the child says that when people make decisions about children they should think about what will make the child happiest, healthiest and safest. When countries make decisions regarding children, they too need to think about what will make children happy, healthy, and safe.

- **Enabling legislation**

Countries want children to grow in a safe and healthy environment. To do this, they make laws and rules to make sure that children are treated equally, have opportunities to education and healthcare and live in a safe environment. This is what we call 'enabling legislation', remember we discussed 'enabling environment'? Well enabling legislation helps us to create that safe space or environment where children have all their rights protected.

- **Best available budget**

When your parents go shopping they may have a 'budget'-a certain amount of money they want to spend on food. When countries want to protect children's rights they too need to have a 'budget'. With 'best available budget' we see how countries spend this money, for example do they spend more on education or healthcare, or where can they spend more money. Having a good budget and resources for children helps to make sure that children can access more opportunities and live in a healthy, and safe environment.

- **Respect for the views of the child/child participation**

You know how you have thoughts and ideas you like to say? Respect for the views of the child means that grown-ups listen and take your thoughts seriously.

When adults make decisions that affect you, you can tell them your thoughts and ideas and they will take them seriously. This means that you are included in decisions that affect you, and your thoughts and ideas are important to make decisions that will keep you happy, healthy, and safe.

- **Collection and analysis of disaggregate data**

Did you take a look at the numbers or data in this report? Well, it was possible for us to make these numbers because countries collected information on all the issues we have discussed. This data is important to make sure that all children are protected and live in a safe environment. Collecting data also helps organisations like us make reports like these which are used to make sure that children like you have their rights protected.

- **State-civil society cooperation**

Many organisations work hard all around the world to make sure that children everywhere can live in a happy, healthy, and safe environment. When governments make decisions about children, it is also important that these organisations can share their thoughts and ideas since they also want children to have a safe, happy, and healthy environment. This is what we call 'state-civil society cooperation'.

**THE COMPLETE RANKINGS AND RANKINGS PER  
DOMAIN ARE AVAILABLE AT:**

**[WWW.KIDSRIGHTS.ORG/RESEARCH/KIDSRIGHTS-INDEX/](http://WWW.KIDSRIGHTS.ORG/RESEARCH/KIDSRIGHTS-INDEX/)**

