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**ChildFund Alliance calls on world leaders at U.N. General Assembly to end violence against children**

RICHMOND, Va. – Sept. 25, 2014 – As world leaders gather to discuss the next set of developmental goals at the United Nations General Assembly this week, ChildFund Alliance members will make the case that prevention of violence against children must be added to the next set of goals.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – which will expire next year – brought about dramatic changes in developing countries, including declines in child mortality and improvements in primary school enrollment. However, child protection was not on that agenda, which, according to a recent study, compromises the safety of children and results in high costs to governments around the world.

[The study](#), compiled by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and commissioned by the ChildFund Alliance, reveals that the total costs of physical, psychological and sexual violence against children are up to 8 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – more than the combined GDPs of Australia, Canada, India and Mexico.

“This research clearly demonstrates that the cost of not acting on violence against children is far more expensive than preventing it — prevention pays,” says Andrew Johnson, acting Secretary General of the ChildFund Alliance. “It is vital that the post-2015 agenda addresses violence against children. Children themselves are calling for governments to finish the job they started 15 years ago with the MDGs and for the prevention of violence to be included in the new agenda.”

The report, a part of ChildFund Alliance's Free From Violence campaign, analysed previous research on the costs of violence against children in high- and middle-income countries. Researchers used these estimates to obtain a global cost in terms of productivity loss for the total number of victims in a given year.

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The study also estimates that the global costs of children being forced to work in hazardous conditions, which deprives them of their childhood and formal education, amount to more than \$97 billion per year.

“Violence against children is all too common across the world, and in developing countries children face special challenges,” said Anne Lynam Goddard, president and CEO of ChildFund International, which is a member of the Alliance. “Continuing to raise awareness about the issue is critical. As this study shows, preventing childhood violence doesn’t just make humanitarian sense – it makes economic sense.”

The study estimates the annual costs of children being recruited by armed forces and militias at \$144 million, factoring in the loss of children’s productive capacity over their lifetimes due to major injuries, disabilities, psychological trauma or death, as well as the costs of reintegrating children into the school system.

ChildFund Alliance’s study, [\*The Free Charters: Children’s Priorities for the Post-2015 Development Agenda\*](#), documents the views and aspirations of children as the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expire and leaders create the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

ChildFund Alliance conducted more than 50 consultations with children in 40 countries across Africa, Asia Pacific, the Americas and Europe — more than 2,300 children in all were surveyed to capture their priorities for the post-2015 agenda.

Violence against children was the most-cited issue, arising in 82 percent of the participating countries, and with particular calls for ending bullying, child labor, child marriage, child trafficking, corporal punishment, female genital mutilation and cutting, recruitment of children by armed forces or groups, and violence in schools.

Additionally, children strongly endorsed that the gains made under the MDGs should continue, with their top three issues being the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (82%), universal primary education (81%) and the eradication of HIV and AIDS (74%).

The report includes “charters” produced by children in all 40 countries, calling on their governments to continue the work of the MDGs and to add other priorities — especially the prevention of violence against children — among the SDGs. Both reports are available at ChildFund Alliance’s Free From Violence campaign and advocacy website at [www.freefromviolence.org](http://www.freefromviolence.org).



**About ChildFund**

ChildFund International is a global child development and protection agency serving more than 18.1 million children and family members in 30 countries. For 75 years, we have helped the world's deprived, excluded and vulnerable children survive and thrive to reach their full potential and become leaders of enduring change. As a member of ChildFund Alliance, we create supportive environments in which children can flourish. For more information about ChildFund visit [www.ChildFund.org](http://www.ChildFund.org).