

How are Kenya's children?

Kenya has ratified (pledged to follow) the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This means that Kenya must respect the rights of the child and listen to what children have to say. Are the rights of the child respected in Kenya? You and other children in Kenya are the experts. The facts below are from the United Nations.

20.3 million children

41.6 million people live in Kenya. 20.3 million are children, and 6.8 million of the children are under five years old.

Name and nationality

From the day you are born you have the right to have a name and to be registered as a citizen in your country. More than 1.5 million children are born every year in Kenya. 4 out of 10 of them are never registered. There is no documented proof that they exist!

Survive and grow

You have the right to life. Kenya must do all it can to allow children to survive and develop. 1 out of 13 children in Kenya (107,000 every year) dies before the age of 5, usually due to causes that could have been prevented.

Health and health care

You have the right to food, clean water and medical care. You have the right to privacy when consulting an adult about any health problem. 6 of 10 children in Kenya have water from improved water sources. Only 3 of 10 children have access to adequate sanitation facilities. About 220,000 children live with HIV/AIDS. 1.1 million are AIDS orphans.

A home, clothing, food and security

You have the right to a home, food, clothing, education, health care and security. 4 out of 10 children in Kenya live in extreme poverty with less than 1.25 US-dollar (106 Kenya Shillings) a day to live on.

Protection against violence

You have the right to protection against all forms of violence, including neglect, maltreatment and abuse. Only 34 countries have forbidden all forms of corporal punishment for children. Many still allow caning in schools. In 2010 Kenya became one of the countries that have forbidden all forms of corporal punishment!

Hazardous child labour

You have the right to be protected against both economic exploitation and work that is hazardous to your health or which prevents you from going to school. All work is prohibited for children under 12. Some children are forced into the worst forms of child labour, such as being debt slaves, child soldiers or used for commercial sexual exploitation. An estimated 2.7 million children (almost 3 out of 10 children aged 5-14) in Kenya have to work.

School and education

You have the right to go to school. Primary and secondary schools should be free for everyone. 8 out of 10 children in Kenya go to school, but many of them leave school too early.

YOUR VOICE MUST BE HEARD!

You have the right to say what you think about any issue that affects you. The adults should listen to the child's opinion before they make decisions, which must always be made in the best interest of the child!

Sources: Unicef 2013. Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children 2013.