

# How should governments spend money for children's rights?

## What do children think?



In this report you can find the **results from a study** that asked children about **how they thought governments should spend money** for children's rights.

### Who was involved?

2,693 children  
from 71 different  
countries

### How were they involved?

Online surveys  
Face-to-face  
conversations

Read more to find out what  
the children said...

## Why should governments spend money on children's rights?

Children from across the world gave us many reasons about WHY governments should spend money on children's rights.

Here are some of the reasons....

Because children are entitled to live good lives, and this requires money from governments

'Public money should be invested to offer children a decent life' – Eastern Europe

Because by investing in children, governments are investing in the future

'Investing in children is a long-term investment' – Asia-Pacific

BUT, only 1 in 3 (34%) children feel that their government thinks about children when deciding how to spend money

My government thinks about children when deciding how to spend money...Do children agree?



# What should government spend money on?

When the children were asked which rights they felt their governments were not spending enough on, the **3 most popular choices** were:

Support for families who can't afford things like food and houses

Taking the views of children seriously

Giving children safe places to play

Children in different countries had different views on what governments should spend money. Here are some suggestions from children from different parts of the world...

'Please invest in our school heating system. Our parents have to pay for that' – Eastern Europe

'Parents trained on how to treat children well' –Latin America/ Caribbean

'Government must ensure that children are protected' (from death and serious harm) - Africa

'We need a decent house to live. Provide funds for people who do not have any house and living inside slums or living on pavements.' – Asia-Pacific

'Children's activities and sports' – Western Europe

# Who should government spend money on?

The children said that money should be spent in a way that allows ALL children to enjoy their rights...

**BUT, 3 out of 5 (59%) children DID NOT think this was how money was spent in their country.**

Children from different parts of the world agreed that governments should make sure spending helps children living in poverty, such as, children who are homeless, forced to work, or children living with very little money.

Here are some examples of what children said about **who** their government should spend money on...

'All children, not just a few selected groups, should equally benefit from programs, projects or services' – Asia Pacific

'More funds should be allocated ...to cover children in the very remote areas of the country so that they can equally enjoy their rights as (much) as those in the cities' - Africa

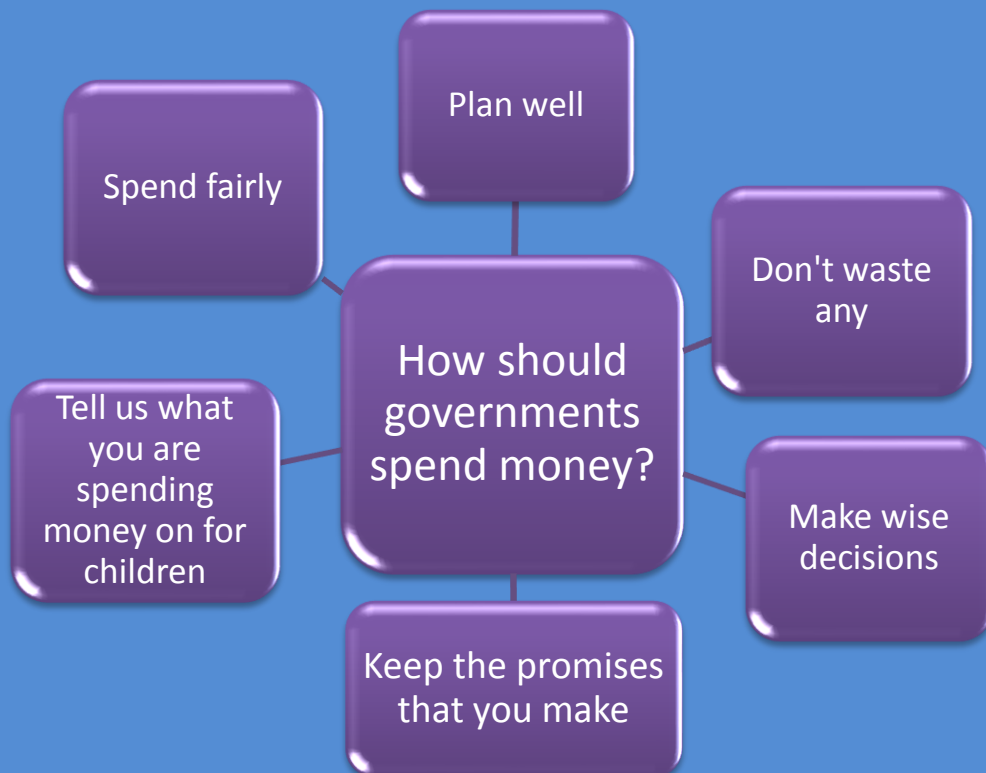
'More money should be spent on youth homelessness' – North America

'There are no financial resources for (homeless children), they are prone to infections, their quality of life is very low' – Latin America/ Caribbean

'Think of all children. Think of minorities, the homeless, LGBTQ kids, all of them. Not just the rich, straight, white ones.' - North America

# How should governments spend money?

The children suggested how they thought governments should spend money...



Here are some examples of what the children said...

'Spend money fairly and wisely' - Africa

'Publish records of how the money is spent' – Western Europe

'Keep your promises' – Latin America/ Caribbean

'Public money should be invested to offer children a decent life' – Eastern Europe

'Don't waste our money on something that is useless...BE EFFICIENT! SAVE MONEY!' – Asia-Pacific

'There should be enough budget to provide for all the rights of children' – Asia-Pacific

# Finally, children wanted to be involved in government decision-making

Children think that governments would **make better decisions** about how to spend money **if they listened to children's views**, and they want to help.

*What children think should happen:*

Nearly **9 out of 10** children agreed that it is important that governments listen to children's views on how to spend money.

*What children think is happening now:*

... but only **1 out of 3** children agreed that their government thinks about them when deciding how to spend money.

In order to help their governments make better decisions, children want their governments to....

- **Include them** in making decisions on how they spend money
- **Help them understand** how they spend money
- **Provide clear information**
- **Help them express** their views
- **Show** children how they spend money, in a child friendly way

'We are experts in child-related spending!' – Asia-Pacific

'Maybe they (the government) need to be trained to understand our views' – Eastern Europe

'There should always be a space for children's voices to be heard.' - Africa

'It is impossible for them to invest in us if they do not ask us what to invest in! We know; they should ask' – Latin America/Caribbean

# What happens to the information gathered in this study?

Will people working in government and people working for children's rights know what children said? **Yes!!**

These results have been sent to the **Human Rights Council** at the United Nations.

And, the **Committee on the Rights of the Child** will be using these results to help them write their General Comment on Public Expenditure. This will be advice that will be sent to **almost all governments in the world**, advising them on how they can spend money for children's rights in a better way.

Also, many organisations who work for children are using this information to help them work better for children's rights.

Where can I find more information on this study?

Visit **Child Rights Connect** to learn more about the project:  
[www.childrightsconnect.org/govtspendingsurvey](http://www.childrightsconnect.org/govtspendingsurvey)

On this website you can find:

A longer report that includes more information and more details

(To access the full report online, click **here**)

A video that presents the main messages from children

(To access this video online, click **here**)