



**Out of the
Shadows**

**2026 Global Out of the Shadows Index
Methodology Paper**

May 2026

Researched and developed by



**Together
for girls**

**ECONOMIST
IMPACT**

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Should you require any further information about the methodology, data or findings from the 2026 Out of the Shadows Index, please contact policy@economist.com.

What is the Out of the Shadows Index?

The *Out of the Shadows Index* is the first global benchmark assessing how governments are taking action to address sexual violence against children (SVAC). The index ranks 60 countries across six regions, which together are home to 83% of the world's children. It does not attempt to measure the scale of the problem, but seeks to assess national progress on a range of foundational laws, policies, programmes and services that governments should have in place to tackle this pressing issue.

The index aims to increase transparency by highlighting strengths and weaknesses in current

strategies, offering a practical roadmap to guide action and drive accountability. It is aligned with internationally accepted standards and frameworks, helping governments to identify gaps and make strong pledges as they work toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals, including Target 16.2 to end all forms of violence against children by 2030.¹

The Index is researched and developed by Economist Impact, with advocacy and engagement efforts led by [Together for Girls](#) (TfG) and funding from the [Oak Foundation](#).

A note on terminology

The Index uses “sexual violence against children (SVAC)” or “childhood sexual violence” to encompass any act of a sexual nature against a person under 18 years of age, including physical, verbal, non-verbal, and technology-facilitated conduct. This includes both contact and non-contact sexual acts whether attempted or completed, such as rape and sexual assault, exploitation, harassment and sexualised exposure or communication.² This approach recognises the broad spectrum of sexual violence that children may experience, including violence perpetrated by both adults and peers,³ including instances where a child lacks the capacity to give informed consent or where there is an imbalance of age, development, responsibility or authority.^{4,5}

This definition and the terminology used in the Index and accompanying materials aims to align with the *Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*, developed by End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT) and partners, and Unicef's *International Classification of Violence against Children*.

¹ Violence against children. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Sustainable Development. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/violence-against-children>

² The exploitative nature of the behaviour is what distinguishes sexual abuse from sexual exploitation of children. The UN defines any sexual exploitation of children or adults as follows: “Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another”

³ Up to half of survivors report that the person who perpetrated the violence was a peer or another child at the time. See: Schaathun IL, Nenseth IR, Rognmo K, Hafstad GS. *Factors differentiating risk of sexual abuse victimization by adults and peers among adolescents*. Child Abuse & Neglect. 2024. 151:106707. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106707>.

⁴ Griejer S, Doek S. *Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*. ECPAT. March 2025. Available at: <https://ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Second-Edition-Terminology-Guidelines-final.pdf>

⁵ International Classification of Violence against Children (ICVAC). UNICEF. January 2025.

Available at: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/international-classification-of-violence-against-children/>

How was the Index developed?

The Index is now in its third iteration, following editions published in 2019 and 2022. The 2026 Index is based on an updated methodology and Index framework developed by Economist Impact. These revisions were informed by an evidence review process commissioned by TfG in 2024, to understand how the Index is used, barriers to uptake and how it could be strengthened to improve utility. The assessment highlighted several priorities, including improving indicator relevance, strengthening the Index's advocacy value, improving data validation processes and increasing local ownership, including through civil society.

Building on these findings, Economist Impact revised the Index framework, with advisory input

from TfG and a multi-sector Advisory Group composed of 17 experts and academics, civil society representatives, youth advocates and survivor leaders (see Appendix 2). The Advisory Group met twice in spring 2025 to guide the framework revision process, to ensure the Index is technically robust, usable and accessible in practice and survivor-informed. Two further meetings were held in autumn 2025 and spring 2026 to discuss the advocacy strategy for the Index, and the communications strategy and launch planning, respectively.

What does the Index measure?

The 2026 Index scores countries on 23 indicators across four domains, assessing a foundational set of laws, policies, strategies and services that a government should have in place to end SVAC in its country (see Appendix 2). Index domains are:

- 1 Governance and accountability:** Assesses whether governments have the leadership, plans and evidence base needed to prevent and respond to SVAC—alongside efforts to engage survivors, children and adolescents in shaping more inclusive and responsive systems.
- 2 Prevention:** Examines a range of key measures to reduce the risk of SVAC before it occurs and respond quickly to suspected abuse, covering: national education systems; parenting and care-giver support; safeguarding systems; and accessible helplines.
- 3 Healing:** Explores whether survivors can access timely, free and multi-disciplinary recovery services and support, spanning: crisis care and follow-up services; national guidance for response professionals; and other practical enablers of recovery such as legal aid and pathways to compensation.

- 4 Justice:** Assesses the strength of legal protections and justice-system capacity to respond to SVAC, including: comprehensive criminalisation of offline and online offences; specialised law enforcement capability; and safeguards for children in criminal justice proceedings.

The Index also includes background indicators, which provide contextual measures that help interpret Index results, but do not contribute to scoring. These indicators describe countries' structural conditions and broader risk/protective environment, spanning: economic and governance conditions; gender equality and social inclusion; and indicators linked to violence-against-children systems and prevalence.

The organisation of the Index framework draws on the “Prevention, healing, and justice” framework developed by the global [Brave Movement](#); this was based on global consultations with survivors to ensure that frameworks for ending violence against women and children were informed by and responsive to individuals with lived experience of trauma.⁶

⁶ Ligiero D, De Angulo B, Gatera G. *Prevention, healing, and justice: a survivor-centred framework for ending violence against women and children*. The Lancet. February 2024. 403;10426:595-597. Available at: <https://cdn.togetherforgirls.org/assets/files/prevention-healing-justice-brave-movement-survivors-of-childhood-sexual-violence.pdf>

How were countries selected for inclusion?

The Index covers 60 countries across six regions (see Appendix 1). Countries were selected by Economist Impact during the development of the 2019 iteration of the Index as a representative global sample that reflects that SVAC affects all nations, regardless of wealth, geography or culture.⁷ The selection began with the G20 and “Pathfinding” countries—those committed to faster progress under the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children. Economist Impact also

included countries that have carried out Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys or collected comparable data on sexual violence against boys, as noted by UNICEF. Expert input guided the inclusion of countries of special concern and those with high estimated rates of sexual violence, based on the Know Violence in Childhood global learning initiative. Final adjustments ensured balanced regional coverage, following World Bank income and geographic classifications.

⁷ The 2022 Index assessed the same countries as the 2019 Index, except that Guatemala replaced Myanmar because of difficulties in accessing data in Myanmar. The 2026 Index assesses the same countries as the 2022 Index.

What data sources were used to score the Index and how was the data collected?

All data for the Index were collected and analysed by the Economist Impact project team. Data collection took place between July and December 2025. The Index includes two types of indicators: those scored through desk-based qualitative research by Economist Impact; and those based on existing publicly available data from reputable third-party sources.

- The majority of indicators were scored using data collected through desk-based qualitative research. To score these indicators, Economist Impact used experienced research analysts with the required linguistic expertise. Wherever possible, country research was conducted by in-country researchers. Analysts reviewed publicly available information and provided structured and referenced responses aligned to the indicator scoring guidance (see Appendix 4). Key sources reviewed included:
 - Primary legal texts and policy documents;
 - Government websites and publications (including national action plans, annual reports and guidance issued by relevant authorities, such as child protection agencies, child affairs bodies and law enforcement);
 - Reports and assessments produced by international and civil society organisations;

- Academic literature and technical studies; and
- Credible international and local news reporting, where relevant.

Following data collection, Economist Impact undertook an extensive quality assurance process. The project team reviewed all qualitative entries for completeness and accurate interpretation of source material, conducting several rounds of follow-up queries and revisions with analysts where clarification or additional evidence was required. TfG also reviewed draft data as part of the quality assurance process. Following reviews, Economist Impact conducted a calibration exercise across countries to ensure consistent application of scoring criteria and minimise variability in interpretation between analysts and reviewers.

- Another subset of indicators draws on existing, publicly available data published by reputable third-party sources (including ECPAT International, the World Health Organization (WHO), Girls Not Brides and the US Department of State). For these indicators, Economist Impact collected data from the original sources and applied the Index scoring criteria.

How were countries scored when SVAC is regulated at the sub-national level?

In most cases, the assessment focused on the national level. However, in countries with federal or highly decentralised governance systems, responsibility for SVAC (or related legislative areas) may sit with sub-national authorities. For example, in some countries, criminal laws applying to offences that occur within a given state, province or territory are enacted and enforced by sub-national authorities.

For all countries, Economist Impact used the national framework for scoring where legislation, policies or plans applied nationwide. However, where an indicator addressed an issue for which authority is clearly delegated to sub-national governments, the country was scored using one proxy sub-national jurisdiction. In these cases,

Economist Impact selected the proxy jurisdiction whose gross national income (GNI) per capita was closest to the national median. This approach was used to ensure the selected jurisdiction was broadly economically representative of the country as a whole and minimised potential bias from choosing jurisdictions that are substantially wealthier or poorer than the national average.

GNI data were sourced from [The Global Data Lab \(GDL\)](#) at the [Nijmegen School of Management](#), Radboud University, Netherlands. As GNI-per-capita data were unavailable for the UAE, GDP-per-capita data were used as the closest available proxy and the same selection approach was applied. The list of sub-national jurisdictions reviewed is included in Appendix 5.

How was the data validated?

To validate the research, TfG led an exercise which gave multiple stakeholders—including governments, Advisory Group members and survivor leaders—the opportunity to review and provide input on the draft findings. This data validation process was completed between October 2025 and February 2026.

To deliver an effective and accessible data validation process, TfG leveraged its partner networks and contacts to identify government officials to engage and make the case for their involvement in validation. Further, TfG invested in translation and interpretation to communicate with governments in their respective national languages.

For this review process, TfG endeavoured to identify the correct focal point for matters of child protection and sexual violence in each country. Across countries, it engaged with ministries or departments of child protection, education, families, gender, health, justice, labour and social development, and women, among others.

TfG began the data validation process with a series of six regional webinars, to which government officials and civil society representatives were invited and which more than 100 individuals attended. These webinars provided an overview of

the Index and explained the purpose of the data validation phase.

After each webinar, TfG emailed the draft qualitative findings for each country to its respective government for review and input. Government officials then submitted comments to validate initial findings, provide additional information and/or request score changes by sharing additional publicly available evidence to justify an alternate score.

In parallel with government review, TfG shared draft findings with members of the Advisory Group and the [Survivor Advocates Globally Empowered \(SAGE\)](#), the survivor advisory council of the [Brave Movement](#). This approach followed the recommendation of the evidence review process undertaken in 2024 to conduct a structured review cycle with civil society and survivor advocates to supplement government input.

Throughout the review process, TfG offered optional one-to-one sessions to address government concerns or questions and to discuss opportunities to act on the draft findings in order to strengthen prevention and response efforts.

See Appendix 6 for a list of countries that participated in the data validation exercise.

How was the data modelled to calculate the Index scores and rankings?

Indicator scores are normalised and then aggregated across categories to enable a comparison of broader concepts across countries. Normalisation rebases the raw indicator data to a common unit so that it can be aggregated. All indicators in this model are normalised to a 0 to 100 scale, where 100 indicates a maximum score.

Most indicators are transformed on the basis of a min/max normalisation, where the minimum and maximum raw data values across the 60 countries are used to bookend the indicator scores. The indicators for which a higher value suggests a more favourable environment have been normalised on the basis of:

$$x = (x - \min(x)) / (\max(x) - \min(x))$$

where $\min(x)$ and $\max(x)$ are, respectively, the lowest and highest values in the 60 countries for

any given indicator. The normalised value is then transformed from a 0-1 value to a

0-100 score to make it directly comparable with other indicators. This in effect means that the country with the highest raw data value will score 100, while the lowest will score 0 for all indicators in the Index.

For the indicators for which a high value indicates an unfavourable environment, the normalisation function takes the form of:

$$x = (x - \max(x)) / (\min(x) - \max(x))$$

where $\min(x)$ and $\max(x)$ are, respectively, the lowest and highest values in the 60 countries for any given indicator. The normalised value is then transformed into a positive number on a scale of 0-100 to make it directly comparable with other indicators.

How were weightings assigned to the data to calculate scores and rankings?

The Index applies equal weights to each scored metric. Some indicators are composed of a single metric, while others are split into multiple sub-metrics, with each one equally weighted. Each metric contributes the same amount to the overall Index score. Indicator and domain scores accordingly reflect the number of scored metrics they contain.

Equal weighting at the metric level is appropriate given the conceptual design of the Index. The 2026

Index assesses a foundational set of laws, policies, strategies and services that governments should have in place to prevent and respond to SVAC. Each metric is therefore treated as a core building block of an effective national system. By giving metrics equal weight, the Index reflects the principle that credible progress requires a baseline level of performance across the full framework.

Out of the Shadows Index equal metric weights			
No.	Indicator name	Weight	Contribution to overall score
1	Governance and accountability	21%	
1.1	National commitments	14%	3%
1.2	National Action Plans (NAPs)	29%	
1.2.1	NAP: violence against children	50%	3%
1.2.2	NAP: child safety online	50%	3%
1.3	Survivor and youth engagement	29%	
1.3.1	National Survivors Council (NSC)	50%	3%
1.3.2	Child engagement in national policy-making	50%	3%
1.4	Budgetary transparency	14%	3%
1.5	Data collection	14%	3%
2	Prevention	15%	
2.1	Education for students	20%	3%
2.2	Parenting and care-giver support	20%	3%
2.3	Background checks	20%	3%
2.4	Training for healthcare providers	20%	3%
2.5	Availability of child helpline	20%	3%
3	Healing	15%	
3.1	Survivor medical care	20%	3%
3.2	Integrated survivor services	20%	3%
3.3	Health sector guidelines	20%	3%
3.4	Legal aid	20%	3%
3.5	Compensation	20%	3%

Out of the Shadows Index equal metric weights			
No.	Indicator name	Weight	Contribution to overall score
4	Justice	50%	
4.1	Laws against corporal punishment	6%	3%
4.2	Legal minimum marriage age	6%	3%
4.3	Laws against child sexual abuse	41%	
4.3.1	Age of sexual consent	14%	3%
4.3.2	Contact sexual violence	14%	3%
4.3.3	Non-contact sexual violence	14%	3%
4.3.4	Intra-familial child sexual abuse	14%	3%
4.3.5	Positions of authority or trust	14%	3%
4.3.6	Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation	14%	3%
4.3.7	Sexual exploitation	14%	3%
4.4	Laws against online child sexual violence	18%	
4.4.1	Online grooming	33%	3%
4.4.2	Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)	33%	3%
4.4.3	Internet service provider (ISP) duty to report	33%	3%
4.5	Extraterritoriality and extradition	6%	3%
4.6	Statute of limitations (SOL) reform	6%	3%
4.7	Specialised law enforcement and international co-operation mechanisms	12%	
4.7.1	Specialised law enforcement capacity	50%	3%
4.7.2	INTERPOL database	50%	3%
4.8	Special procedures for child survivors in the criminal justice system	6%	3%

What are the study's limitations?

Comparability between Index iterations

The 2026 Index is the third iteration of the programme. Substantial revisions were made to the framework and indicator set between the previous edition (2022) and the current edition, including the addition or removal of indicators, changes in data sources or assessment criteria (see How was the Index developed?). As a result, scores and ranks are not directly comparable across the 2022 and 2026 editions. Stakeholders should therefore avoid interpreting changes in a country's rank or score as evidence of progress or regression.

Tackling implementation

The Index is primarily designed to measure inputs: whether countries have put in place the laws, policies, strategies, plans and institutional arrangements needed to address and prevent SVAC. While a small number of indicators capture aspects of implementation, most focus on the existence of these enabling measures. The Index does not assess the quality of implementation, the adequacy of funding, the consistency of enforcement or the effectiveness of measures in practice. A robust assessment of implementation and impact would require methods and resources beyond the scope of this project.

The Index therefore provides a picture of the policy and institutional landscape, but cannot determine whether formal commitments are being translated into practice or delivering measurable results. Its findings should be read alongside complementary evidence on implementation, such as service delivery data, outcome measures and insights from civil society, frontline practitioners and those with lived experience.

Relying on publicly available information

The Index relies exclusively on publicly available information, meaning all information must be available in the public sphere to be considered for inclusion and analysis. This research approach helps ensure transparency, reproducibility and accountability, allowing stakeholders to verify findings and track progress over time. However, this approach also has certain limitations:

- In some cases, relevant strategies, reports, datasets or other evidence remains unpublished, available only in limited formats or restricted (eg, not available online, password-protected). As a result, some scores may reflect the absence of publicly accessible evidence rather than the absence of activity, so may under-represent the extent of government action.
- Public availability of information also varies across countries and may be influenced by differences in resources, administrative capacity, transparency practices and documentation norms.

Addressing data gaps

In several cases, the publicly available datasets used to score certain indicators did not cover all countries included in the Index (see What data sources were used to score the Index and how were they collected?). Where an existing dataset did not provide data for one or more countries, Economist Impact conducted qualitative research to fill these gaps. In such cases, the research team applied scoring criteria that were aligned with the definitions, thresholds and approach used by the original data source.

Sub-national jurisdictions

Economist Impact scored countries with federal or devolved systems of government using one proxy sub-national jurisdiction where relevant (see How were countries scored when SVAC is regulated at the sub-national level?). This approach was adopted within the scope of the project, as it was not feasible to systematically collect and validate comparable data for all sub-national jurisdictions across countries.

In such cases, Economist Impact selected the proxy jurisdiction whose GNI per capita was closest to the national median to avoid basing scores on atypical high- or low-income jurisdictions and to approximate the economic conditions most representative of the country as a whole. However, this approach does not guarantee that the proxy jurisdiction is representative in other respects, such as relative population, SVAC laws, enforcement or political priorities. Scoring a single jurisdiction may also mask or understate variation in protections across the whole country. Stakeholders interpreting Index results should therefore consider potential sub-national differences in capacity and commitment.

Definitions and terminology across countries

Countries use different legal and policy terminology to describe sexual violence, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, consent and childhood. These definitions are often distributed across multiple statutes and policy instruments. In some cases, it can be challenging to consistently map country-specific language on to the Index's indicator definitions. This requires some interpretation, particularly where legal concepts do not translate cleanly. Economist Impact made every effort to ensure that research into regulations, legislation and enforcement was consistent and accurate, in light of international variation in language and legal framing.

A further consideration is that, in some contexts, stakeholders may view the standards promoted by the Index as misaligned with prevailing legal traditions or cultural norms. However, the Index applies a consistent set of best-practice standards across all countries to enable accountability and comparability. Scores should be interpreted as

measuring alignment with internationally recognised good practice rather than alignment with national legal traditions or cultural norms.

Challenges assessing budget transparency and SVAC budgeting

Monitoring government budgeting and expenditure on SVAC is an important component of any assessment of government action on the issue. The Index therefore initially included an indicator designed to assess whether national budget documents contained specific SVAC-related line items. However, this indicator was ultimately removed because of methodological challenges that limited its comparability and reliability across countries.

Budget structures and reporting practices vary considerably between countries, making it difficult to consistently identify relevant allocations. In many cases, expenditure is presented under programme titles rather than clearly labelled categories, while SVAC-related funding is often embedded within broader budget lines such as child protection, victim services, education or social services.

A further challenge was that relevant financial information was often located outside the budget documents reviewed for the Index, such as in ministry reports, programme records, funding announcements or national plans and strategies. Furthermore, detailed expenditure data may also only be published after the budget cycle, while ongoing commitments may have been approved in earlier years that aren't visible in recent documents.

Taken together, these factors mean that scoring the indicator could unintentionally reward transparency in documentation rather than actual investment, which would weaken the credibility of the Index. To avoid introducing bias, the indicator was replaced with a more general measure of budget transparency drawn from the [Open Budget Survey](#). Although this proxy is not specific to SVAC, it provides a relevant indication of governments' transparency in publishing financial information. Data collected for the original indicator will be made available in the Index workbook for reference, but it is not included in the final scoring.

Appendix 1: Country list

Americas and the Caribbean	East Asia and the Pacific	Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa	Europe and Central Asia	Middle East and North Africa	South Asia
Argentina	Australia	Angola	Albania	Algeria	Bangladesh
Brazil	Cambodia	Burkina Faso	France	Egypt	India
Canada	China	Cameroon	Germany	Morocco	Nepal
Colombia	Indonesia	Côte d'Ivoire	Italy	Saudi Arabia	Pakistan
El Salvador	Japan	Congo (Democratic Republic)	Kazakhstan	UAE	Sri Lanka
Guatemala	Malaysia	Ethiopia	Russia		
Jamaica	Mongolia	Ghana	Romania		
Mexico	Philippines	Kenya	Serbia		
Peru	South Korea	Madagascar	Sweden		
US	Thailand	Mozambique	Turkey		
Venezuela	Vietnam	Niger	UK		
		Nigeria	Uzbekistan		
		Rwanda			
		South Africa			
		Tanzania			
		Uganda			

Appendix 2: Advisory Group members

Name	Organisation	Designation	Region
Dr Alexandra Souza Martins	UN Office on Drugs and Crime	Head, global programme to end violence against children	Americas
Dr Arturo Harker	INSPIRE Working Group/Universidad de Los Andes	Director, IMAGINA research center; Associate professor, school of government	Americas
Dr Bernie Madrid	Child Protection Network	Executive director	Asia
Brikena Zogaj	World Vision International	Senior advisor, external engagement (representing the CSO forum)	Europe
Bryanna Mariñas	Global Youth-Led Movement on Ending Violence Against Children	Founder and global coordinator	Asia
Dr Daniela Ligiero	TfG/Brave Movement	Executive director	Americas
Dr Deborah Fry	Childlight/University of Edinburgh	Lecturer	Europe
ElsaMarie D'Silva	Brave Movement	Co-founder, Brave Movement; Vice chair, SAGE (Survivor Advocates Globally Empowered); Founder, Red Dot Foundation (representing the SAGE)	Asia
Helen Morton	WHO	Political advocacy consultant	Europe
Louis Lunts	Cummins & Partners	Partner and managing director	Americas
Dr Lucie Cluver	Oxford University	Professor, child and family social work	Africa/Europe
Paula Wachter	Red por la Infancia	Founder and executive director	Americas
Dr Pragathi Tummala	International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN)	Chief executive officer	Americas
Saba Lishan	Africa Child Policy Forum	Coordinator, African partnership to end VAC	Africa
Sabine Rakotomalala	WHO	Senior technical advisor	Europe
Sendrine Constant	ECPAT International	Director of programmes (representing the CSO forum)	Asia/Europe
Serena Tommasino	Safe Online	Senior technical expert	Europe

Appendix 3: Full Index framework and indicator list

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
0	CHILD PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT					
1	Governance and accountability					
1.1	National commitments	Has the country ratified key international legal instruments aimed at protecting children's rights and preventing violence, including sexual violence?	0=No +1=Convention on the Rights of the Child +1=Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography +1=Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure +1=Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime +1=International Labour Organisation's Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour No.182 +1=UN World Tourism Organisation's Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics +1=Lanzarote Convention +1=Budapest Convention	Qualitative rating 0-8; 8=best	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; UN tourism; Council of Europe; International Labour Organisation	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
1.2	National Action Plans (NAPs)					
1.2.1	NAP: violence against children	Does the country have a NAP that addresses sexual violence against children (SVAC)?	<p>0=No NAP addressing SVAC is in place</p> <p>+1=Yes, the country has a NAP that addresses both prevention of and response to SVAC (or includes reference to SVAC prevention and response within a broader violence-against-children/gender-based violence [GBV] plan)</p> <p>+1=Yes, and the NAP sets out SVAC-specific strategies, objectives and/or activities (not only general references to violence or abuse)</p> <p>+1=Yes, and the NAP names lead and/or supporting ministries, agencies or other actors responsible for delivering SVAC-related strategies, objectives and/or activities, or the plan is not publicly available for review to confirm</p> <p>+1=Yes, and the NAP includes timeframes and target dates for SVAC-related strategies, objectives and/or activities, or the plan is not publicly available for review to confirm</p> <p>+1=Yes, and the NAP is fully costed—it specifies the costs and/or budget allocations for the SVAC-related strategies, objectives and/or activities set out in the plan (e.g., itemised activity costs and/or budget lines by objective), or the plan is not publicly available for review to confirm</p>	Qualitative rating 0-5; 5=best	Economist Impact research	2025
1.2.2	NAP: child safety online	Does the country have a NAP that addresses child safety online, including protection from tech-facilitated SVAC?	<p>0=No NAP addressing online SVAC is in place</p> <p>1=Yes, either (a) the NAP addressing SVAC includes online SVAC/online safety, or (b) the country has a separate NAP on child online protection that covers online SVAC</p>	Qualitative rating 0-1; 1=best	Economist Impact research	2025
1.3	Survivor and youth engagement					
1.3.1	National Survivors Council (NSC)	Does the country have a government-supported NSC that ensures survivor-led input on related planning and policy measures at the national level?	<p>0=No, or information not publicly available</p> <p>1=Yes, the government has committed to the formation of a NSC</p> <p>2=Yes, and the NSC is operational</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research; Brave Movement	2025
1.3.2	Child engagement in national policy-making	Are there formal mechanisms through which children and adolescents can influence national child protection or violence prevention policies?	<p>0=No, no formal or informal mechanisms exist, or information is not publicly available</p> <p>1=Yes, informal or ad hoc mechanisms exist but are not regular or well-documented; or a formal mechanism/body exists, but it is unclear whether children are engaged specifically on child protection or violence prevention issues</p> <p>2=Yes, formal, recurring child engagement processes exist, with structured opportunities for children to influence policy on child protection and/or violence prevention</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
1.4	Budgetary transparency	Is comprehensive budget information from the central government available to the public in a useful time frame?	Score (0-100)	Score 0-100; 100=best	International Budget Partnership	2023
	Budgetary commitment to addressing SVAC	Does the national budget include a dedicated allocation for programmes that prevent and respond to SVAC?	Non-scoring	Non-scoring	Economist Impact research	2025
1.5	Data collection	Has the national government conducted, sponsored or endorsed a survey or study to explore the prevalence of SVAC, including online SVAC, in the last ten years?	0=No; no information is publicly available; Yes, but not within the last ten years 1=Yes, but only data on the prevalence of online or offline SVAC is collected and published 2=Yes, data on both the prevalence of online and offline SVAC is collected and published	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research	2025
2	Prevention					
2.1	Education for students	Does the national curriculum include life-skills-based sexuality and reproductive health education for lower-secondary students, including content that builds awareness of sexual violence?	0=Life-skills-based sexuality and reproductive health education is not included in the national curriculum, just abstinence-only education is covered (ie, promotes refraining from sex without broader health education), or information is not publicly available +1=Life-skills-based sexuality and reproductive health education is included in the national curriculum. Abstinence may be emphasised, but additional information (eg, about contraception and condom use) must also be included. +1=Child sexual abuse instruction (ie, awareness, identification, help-seeking) is included in the national curriculum +1=Online safety and the risks of sexual abuse/exploitation through digital technologies are included in the national curriculum	Qualitative rating 0-3; 3=best	Economist Impact research	2025
2.2	Parenting and care-giver support	Are home-visiting programmes and/or centre-based parenting support available in the country?	0=No 1=Yes, either home visiting or centre-based parenting 2=Yes, both home visiting and centre-based parenting	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	WHO; Economist Impact	2020

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
2.3	Background checks	Does the country have strict criminal background check requirements for individuals working in direct contact with children?	<p>0=No. The national–primary or subsidiary–legislation/policies do not include provisions which mandate or include non-mandatory provisions for criminal background checks. Convicted sex offenders are not prohibited from holding positions involving or facilitating direct contact with children</p> <p>1=Partially. The national subsidiary legislation includes non-mandatory provisions for criminal background checks, or they are limited in scope (eg, only for nationals or non-nationals, only for staff, not including consultants of volunteers, or only in public or private settings). The national legislation may also prohibit convicted sex offenders from holding positions in both public and private settings involving or facilitating direct contact with children</p> <p>2=Yes. The national legislation includes provisions which mandate that criminal background checks are carried out for every national or non-national applying for work with or for children, or who is currently working with or for children, including staff, consultants and volunteers. The national legislation may also prohibit convicted sex offenders from holding positions in both public and private settings involving or facilitating direct contact with children</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	ECPAT International; Economist Impact research	2026
2.4	Training for healthcare providers	Does national legislation require pre-service or recurring training on SVAC for general medical doctors who provide primary care to children (eg, general practitioners or family physicians)?	<p>0=No or no information is publicly available</p> <p>1=Yes, national legislation requires pre-service or recurring training on SVAC for general medical doctors who provide primary care to children</p>	Qualitative rating 0-1; 1=best	Economist Impact research	2025
2.5	Availability of child helpline	Does the country have a nationwide, toll-free child helpline that provides support and counselling for children at risk of or experiencing violence, including sexual violence?	<p>0=No; no information is publicly available; or the child helpline is not available country-wide</p> <p>1=Yes, a nationwide child helpline is available, but with limitations: it operates only during specific hours (eg, not on weekends); it is accessible only via phone calls, with no messaging or texting options; or referral mechanisms are not available</p> <p>2=Yes, a nationwide child helpline is available 24/7, with options for voice calls, messaging or texting; the service offers counselling as well as appropriate referral mechanisms</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
3	Healing					
3.1	Medical care for victims and survivors	Does the country provide government-funded medical services for victims and survivors of sexual violence, including timely and free medical examinations, forensic evidence collection and related testing and treatment (eg, STI care, post-exposure prophylaxis [PEP], emergency contraception and injury care)?	<p>0=No. Services are largely unavailable, or services are not free at the point of use</p> <p>1=Very limited. Some government-funded services exist, but they are highly limited in scope and/or geography. Services are often unavailable outside major urban areas, key components of medical care are missing (such as forensic examinations or time-sensitive interventions like PEP or emergency contraception), or survivors frequently face out-of-pocket costs for core services</p> <p>2=Limited/partial. Government-funded services provide some core medical care, but important gaps remain. The service package is incomplete or inconsistently delivered, geographic coverage is uneven, and/or survivors may be charged for certain examinations, tests or treatments</p> <p>3=Substantial but not universal. Comprehensive medical services are largely available and free at the point of use; these include medical examinations, forensic evidence collection and other related care. However, notable access gaps persist, such as in rural areas, service availability or timeliness, or indirect costs may remain</p> <p>4=Full. Government-funded, free and comprehensive medical services are available nationwide. Survivors can access clinical examinations, forensic evidence collection, STI testing and treatment, PEP, emergency contraception, injury care and follow-up services without significant barriers or out-of-pocket costs</p>	Qualitative rating 0-4; 4=best	Economist Impact research	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
3.2	Integrated victim and survivor services	Does the country provide government-funded multi-disciplinary or integrated services for victims and survivors of sexual violence (eg, psychosocial support, legal assistance, child protection and justice services) through a co-ordinated delivery model, including integrated one-stop or Barnahus-type services?	<p>0=No. No evidence of functioning government-funded multi-disciplinary or integrated services. Services are often fragmented, delivered separately and lack co-ordination across sectors</p> <p>1=Very limited. Some evidence of a multi-disciplinary response, with multiple sectors involved (eg, psychosocial, legal, child protection, justice), but services are delivered separately and co-ordination occurs primarily through referrals. No integrated or one-stop service model is in place</p> <p>2=Emerging (pilot/limited integrated services). Limited examples of integrated multi-disciplinary service delivery (eg, one-stop or Barnahus-type centres where multiple services are provided in a co-ordinated setting). These are few in number, not institutionalised, and may be donor- or NGO-driven</p> <p>3=Established but not universal. A clearly defined and institutionalised integrated multi-disciplinary service model exists, with government leadership and cross-sector co-ordination. This includes provision of multiple services through co-ordinated or one-stop settings in various locations, though coverage may not be nationwide and/or access remains uneven</p> <p>4=Full. Government-funded, integrated multi-disciplinary services are established nationwide, with consistent provision of psychosocial, legal, child protection, and justice services through co-ordinated systems, including one-stop or equivalent integrated service delivery models accessible across regions</p>	Qualitative rating 0-4; 4=best	Economist Impact research	2025
3.3	Health sector guidelines	Has the government, or an officially recognised body, issued national guidelines for the clinical and forensic evaluation of children and adolescents who may have experienced sexual violence, and do they provide guidelines on how to preserve evidence?	<p>0=No or information not publicly available</p> <p>1=Yes, but no guidelines on how to preserve evidence are included</p> <p>2=Yes, including guidelines on how to preserve evidence</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
3.4	Legal aid	Are victims and survivors of sexual violence (especially children) entitled to government-funded legal aid/assistance in criminal proceedings?	0=No, or no information is publicly available 1= Yes, victims have a legal entitlement to government-funded legal aid/assistance when their interests are affected in criminal proceedings OR (in common law countries) a legal entitlement exists that ensures victims can access a trained and specialised "support person" or guardian ad litem to support them during criminal proceedings	Qualitative rating 0-1; 1=best	Economist Impact research	2025
3.5	Compensation	Does the country have mechanisms through which victims and survivors of SVAC can seek financial compensation?	0=No or information is not publicly available 1=Yes, at least one legal avenue exists through which victims may seek compensation (eg, civil damages and/or criminal compensation orders), but no dedicated state-funded compensation scheme is available 2=Yes, a state-funded compensation scheme exists and is accessible to survivors of childhood sexual violence	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research	2025
4	Justice					
4.1	Laws against corporal punishment	Has the country enacted legislation which prohibits all corporal punishment of children in all settings including the home?	0=Not fully prohibited in any setting 1=Prohibited in some settings 2=Government committed to full prohibition 3=Prohibited in all settings	Qualitative rating 0-3; 3=best	WHO	2025
4.2	Legal minimum marriage age	Does the country have a minimum legal age for marriage of 18, and are exceptions excluded?	0=No minimum legal age of marriage (all exceptions taken into account) 1=Minimum legal age of marriage below 18 years, taking into account any exceptions 2=Legal age of marriage is 18 years or above, no exceptions	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Girls Not Brides	2024
4.3	Laws against childhood sexual violence					
4.3.1	Age of sexual consent	Does national legislation establish the age of sexual consent to be 18 for all individuals, with a close-in-age exemption for consensual sexual acts between peers?	0=No. The national legislation only establishes age of sexual consent for a specific group (eg, females); or the age of sexual consent is set at an age below 16 1=Partially. The national legislation explicitly indicates that the age of sexual consent unequivocally is 18 for both males and females, but a close-in-age exemption is not provided for; or the national legislation establishes an age of sexual consent, but it is below 18 (but equal to/above 16) for both males and females. A close-in-age exemption may or may not have been provided for 2=Yes. The national legislation explicitly indicates that the age of sexual consent unequivocally is 18 for both males and females, and a close-in-age exemption for sexual acts between peers (of up to three years) is provided by law	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	ECPAT International; Economist Impact	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
4.3.2	Contact sexual violence	Does national legislation criminalise contact SVAC?	0=No or no information is publicly available 1=Yes, but the law applies to females only 2=Yes, and the law applies to both males and females	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	WHO; Economist Impact	2020
4.3.3	Non-contact sexual violence	Does national legislation criminalise non-contact SVAC?	0=No or no information is publicly available 1=Yes, but the law applies to females only 2=Yes, and the law applies to both males and females	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	WHO; Economist Impact	2020
4.3.4	Intra-familial child sexual abuse	Does national legislation explicitly criminalise intra-familial child sexual abuse (ie, sexual abuse committed by a family member or care-giver)?	0=No. No explicit criminalisation of intrafamilial child sexual abuse is found in national law 1=Limited coverage. National law explicitly criminalises some specific sexual acts when committed by family members/care-givers (eg, incest, obscene acts or abuse of a relationship of dependency), and/or provides aggravated penalties for certain offences when committed by a family member or care-giver. However, it does not ensure that sexual intercourse or equivalent penetrative offences with a child below the age of consent are covered in an intra-familial/care-giver context across all children under 18. Coverage may be limited by age group, type of offence or range of relationships 2=Broad coverage. National law explicitly criminalises intra-familial child sexual abuse through specific provisions and/or aggravated penalties, such that sexual intercourse or equivalent penetrative offences with a child below the age of consent are punishable when committed by a family member or care-giver across all children under 18	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
4.3.5	Positions of authority or trust	Does national legislation explicitly criminalise sexual acts against children if the perpetrator is in a position of trust, authority or influence over the child?	<p>0=No. No explicit criminalisation of sexual acts by persons in positions of trust/authority/influence against children is found in national law, or no public text is available</p> <p>1=Limited coverage. National law explicitly criminalises some sexual acts when committed by persons in certain positions of trust/authority/influence (eg, teachers, coaches, institutional carers) and/or provides aggravated penalties in some settings. However, this recognition is limited because it: applies only to specific roles or settings; applies only to certain ages; applies only to certain offence types (eg, non-penetrative acts); or is not gender-neutral</p> <p>2=Broad coverage. National law explicitly criminalises sexual acts by persons in positions of trust/authority/influence through specific provisions and/or aggravating penalties, such that at minimum, sexual intercourse or equivalent penetrative offences with a child below the age of consent are punishable when committed by persons in such positions. This protection applies broadly (ie, to all children under 18, is gender-neutral and covers a wide range of positions of trust, authority, or influence)</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Economist Impact research	2025
4.3.6	Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation	Does national legislation criminalise trafficking of children for sexual purposes?	<p>0=No. National legislation does not criminalises trafficking of children for sexual purposes</p> <p>1=Partially. National legislation criminalises some forms of trafficking of children for sexual purposes, but not all forms or not in full alignment with international standards</p> <p>2=Yes. National legislation criminalises all forms of trafficking of children for sexual purposes in alignment with international standards</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	US Department of State: Trafficking in Persons country reports	2025
4.3.7	Sexual exploitation	Does national legislation include stand-alone provisions that it is an offence to sell/force a child into sexual exploitation for prostitution and to purchase sexual acts from a child?	<p>0=No. The penal or criminal code or trafficking legislation does not include stand-alone provisions that it is an offence to sell/force a child into sexual exploitation for prostitution and to purchase sexual acts from a child.</p> <p>1=Yes. The penal or criminal code or trafficking legislation includes stand-alone provisions that it is an offence to sell/force a child into sexual exploitation for prostitution and to purchase sexual acts from a child.</p>	Qualitative rating 0-1; 1=best	Global Slavery Index	2022

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
4.4	Laws against online childhood sexual violence					
4.4.1	Online grooming	Does national legislation criminalise online child grooming for sexual purposes?	<p>0=No, national legislation does not explicitly criminalise online child grooming for sexual purposes</p> <p>+1=Yes, online child grooming is criminalised where the conduct includes an intent for a meeting to occur (ie, arranging or seeking to arrange an in-person meeting with the child)</p> <p>+1=Yes, online child grooming is criminalised regardless of intent for a meeting to occur (ie, the offence captures grooming conduct, including attempted grooming, via electronic communications intended to facilitate sexual activity, sexual solicitation or sexual exploitation, even without any meeting element)</p> <p>+1=Yes, and the law provides a clear definition or description of “online grooming” (or an equivalent term), describing a pattern of conduct intended to build trust or an emotional connection with a child for the purpose of encouraging, facilitating or exploiting the child for sexual activity (including sexual acts, sexual communication or production of sexual material)</p>	Qualitative rating 0-3; 3=best	Economist Impact research	2025
4.4.2	Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)	Does the country have legislation specific to CSAM, that covers technology-facilitated CSAM offences?	<p>0=No legislation exists with specific regard to CSAM</p> <p>+1=Legislation Specific to CSAM</p> <p>+1=Provides a definition of CSAM</p> <p>+1=Criminalises technology-facilitated CSAM offences</p> <p>+1=Criminalises the knowing possession of CSAM, regardless of the intent to distribute</p>	Qualitative rating 0-4; 4=best	International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC)	2023
4.4.3	Internet service provider (ISP) duty to report	Does national legislation require ISPs to report suspected CSAM to law enforcement or to some other mandated agency?	<p>0=No</p> <p>1=Yes</p>	Qualitative rating 0-1; 1=best	International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC)	2023

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
4.5	Extraterritoriality and extradition	Does the country have appropriate extraterritoriality and extradition provisions for sexual exploitation of children (SEC) crimes?	<p>0=No. The principle of double criminality applies to both extraterritoriality and extradition provisions for SEC offences. Extraterritoriality provisions—both in terms of active or passive jurisdiction—do not apply to any offences related to sexual exploitation of children. Extradition is not permitted for offences related to sexual exploitation of children</p> <p>1=Partially. The applicability of (passive and active) extraterritoriality and extradition provisions are limited in their scope. For example, extraterritoriality is applicable only for certain of the offences related to sexual exploitation of children or does not cover perpetrators having their habitual residence; or the provisions are applicable but dependant on certain conditions (eg, passive jurisdiction but the offender must be found on the state's territory). The principle of double criminality does not apply to either or both extraterritoriality and extradition provisions</p> <p>2=Yes. The national legislation explicitly provides for both active [1] and passive [2] extraterritoriality for all offences of sexual exploitation of children covered by the legislation of the concerned State. Extradition is possible for SEC offences. The principle of double criminality does not apply to SEC offences for both extraterritoriality and extradition provisions. [1] jurisdiction over offences committed by a State's nationals, even with respect to events occurring entirely abroad [2] jurisdiction over offences committed against a State's nationals by whomsoever committed, even with respect to events occurring entirely abroad.</p>	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	ECPAT International; Economist Impact research	2022/23
4.6	Statute of limitations (SOL) reform	Has the country eliminated the criminal statute of limitations for statutory rape (ie, sexual intercourse with a minor below the age of consent, where force or coercion is not an element of the offence)?	<p>0=Criminal SOL is < 5 years</p> <p>1=Criminal SOL is 5–10 years</p> <p>2=Criminal SOL is 11–15 years</p> <p>3=Criminal SOL is ≥ 16 years</p> <p>5=Criminal SOL is eliminated (ie, prosecution may be commenced at any time; no time bar)</p> <p>+1 modifier: if the limitations period does not begin to run/accrue until the victim/survivor attains the age of majority (or a later date specified by law that is at least the age of majority), rather than beginning at the time of the offence</p>	Qualitative rating 0-5; 5=best	Economist Impact research	2025

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
4.7	Specialised law enforcement and international co-operation mechanisms					
4.7.1	Specialised law enforcement capacity	Does the country have specialised law enforcement mechanisms (eg, dedicated units, designated officers or child-focused intake points within police stations) to respond in a child-sensitive manner to cases of violence against children, including sexual violence?	0=No, there is no specialised law enforcement capacity to respond to violence against children, including sexual violence, or no publicly available information confirms its existence or function 1=Yes, there is evidence of specialised law enforcement capacity to respond to violence against children, including sexual violence, in some or all areas of the country	Qualitative rating 0-1; 1=best	Economist Impact research	2025
4.7.2	INTERPOL database	Is the country connected to INTERPOL's International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database?	0=No or no information in publicly available 1=Yes	Qualitative rating 0-1; 1=best	Economist Impact research; INTERPOL	2025
4.8	Special procedures for child victims in the criminal justice system	Does the national legislation provide special procedures for child victims in the criminal justice system, including child-friendly interviewing practices and protections for children providing testimony?	0=No +1=The legal framework allows child victims to be questioned by police, the judiciary and other authorities in a child-friendly manner. For example, where legislation includes: only specially trained members of the law enforcement authorities shall question child survivors; child victims are questioned by officers of the same gender, except when there is cultural evidence that this would not be in the best interests of the child; guardians shall be present when a child is interviewed about their experience +1=The legal framework allows for child testimony to be video-taped and presented in the courtroom as an official piece of evidence	Qualitative rating 0-2; 2=best	Global Slavery Index	2022
5	Background indicators (non-scoring)					
B1	Economic, demographic and governance					
B01	GDP per capita	GDP per capita	Current US\$	Current US\$	World Bank	2022-2024
B02	Level of poverty	Poverty head-count ratio at national poverty lines	%	%	World Bank	2015-2024
B03	Gini coefficient	Gini coefficient	Score	Score	World Bank	2015-2024

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
B04	Rule of Law Index	Score on the Rule of Law Index	Score	Score	World Justice Project	2024
B2	Gender equality and social Inclusion					
B05	Gender Inequality Index (GII)	GII is a composite metric of gender inequality using three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. A low GII value indicates low inequality between women and men, and vice-versa.	Score	Score	UN Development Programme	2023
B06	Women in parliament	Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (lower or single house)	%	%	Inter-Parliamentary Union	2025
B07	Gender gap in educational attainment	Gender gap in educational attainment	Score	Score	World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report	2025
B08	LGBTQ Equality Index	Equaldex's LGBTQ Equality Index is a combined metric that calculates "the current status of LGBT rights, laws and freedoms (legal Index) as well as public attitudes towards LGBT people (Public Opinion Index)." Higher scores are preferable.	Score	Score	Equaldex	2025
B09	Birth registration	Children under five whose births are registered	%	%	UNICEF	2014-2024
B10	Internet penetration rate	Individuals using the internet	%	%	ITU/World Bank	2023-2024

No.	Indicator	Research question	Scoring guide	Scoring scale	Source	Year
B3	Violence against children					
B11	Lead child protection ministries or agencies	Does the country have lead ministries/agencies with responsibility and mandate to strengthen child protection?	<p>0=There is/are no lead ministries/agencies at national government level in charge of child protection</p> <p>1=There are lead ministries/agencies at the national government level in charge of child protection systems, but they are weak due to limited authority, human capacity, financial resources and mandate</p> <p>2=The lead ministries/agencies in charge of child protection systems are functional and adequately resourced (human and financial resources). Their mandate and authority related to child protection has been established, well-articulated and formally communicated and recognised across government at national and state levels, as well as outside of the government. Work is underway to improve/strengthen links with other national/sub-national bodies with responsibility for child protection.</p> <p>3=The lead ministries/agencies responsible for delivery of child protection at central government level are linked to sub-national bodies (either ministerial departments or local government authority) with responsibility for child protection and are active and effective in fulfilling their child protection responsibilities across the country.</p>	Qualitative rating 0-3; 3=best	UNICEF	2024
B12	Child marriage	Girls married by 18 years	%	%	UNICEF	Various
B13	Sexual violence	Sexual violence prior to 18 years, 18–24 year olds	%	%	WHO (selected multi-country surveys)	Various
B14	Online child sexual abuse	Children reportedly experiencing online image- or video-based sexual abuse in the 12 months prior to data collection	%	%	Childlight	Various

Appendix 4: Research guidance

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
0	CHILD PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT			
1	Governance and accountability			
1.1	National commitments	Has the country ratified key international legal instruments aimed at protecting children's rights and preventing violence, including sexual violence?		
1.2	National Action Plans (NAPs)			
1.2.1	NAP: violence against children	Does the country have a NAP that addresses sexual violence against children (SVAC)?	<p>To qualify, NAPs must be formally adopted or endorsed by the government and in force at the time of assessment (through 2025). Broader violence-against-children or GBV NAPs were also considered, as long as they contained specific strategies, objectives and/or activities related to addressing SVAC. Where multiple relevant NAPs existed, these were reviewed together on a case-by-case basis to assess whether SVAC was comprehensively addressed.</p> <p>Just one point was awarded if a relevant NAP included only high-level commitments or goals related to SVAC, with an additional point awarded based on the inclusion of clear strategies, objectives and/or activities to prevent and respond to SVAC. To receive additional credit, specified time-frames for achieving these strategies, objectives and/or activities, and the actors or agencies responsible for implementation, had to be clearly linked to individual objectives, rather than described in general terms across the document. Likewise, general statements indicating that activities would be funded through existing ministry budgets, or provided only high-level allocations, were not considered sufficient; plans needed to be fully costed, with funding required for specific strategies, objectives and/or activities clearly identified, itemised and linked to implementation components.</p> <p>Aspirational, high-level strategies and/or legal frameworks were not considered. More detailed strategies and/or other documents similar to a NAP that included specific strategies, objectives and/or activities to prevent and respond to SVAC were only eligible for full credit if they contained a detailed implementation matrix (de facto NAP) or an accompanying action/implementation plan (otherwise, they were eligible for a maximum score of two). NGO-led strategies and draft documents were also excluded. NAPs focused narrowly on areas such as sex education or teenage pregnancy alone were not considered. Gender-specific plans were included only where they addressed children broadly, rather than focusing solely on women or girls. Women, Peace and Security Plans were not considered. NAPs that were not publicly available were assessed on a case-by-case basis using available secondary evidence; however, they were eligible for a maximum score of one, as they could not be reviewed in sufficient detail to determine whether they met the full criteria for the indicator.</p>	Where a NAP applies across the country, this indicator is assessed at the national level. However, where states/provinces/territories are responsible for developing their own relevant plans, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
1.2.2	NAP: child safety online	Does the country have a NAP that addresses child safety online, including protection from tech-facilitated SVAC?	To qualify, NAPs must be formally adopted or endorsed by government and in force at the time of assessment (through 2025). Both stand-alone NAPs on child online protection and broader violence-against-children or SVAC NAPs were considered, as long as they explicitly addressed child safety online, including technology-facilitated SVAC. Aspirational or high-level strategies and other policy documents were not included unless they contained a clear implementation framework (de facto NAP) or an accompanying action plan. Related legislation, NGO-led strategies and draft documents without formal government endorsement were also excluded. NAPs that were not publicly available were evaluated on a case-by-case basis, based on available secondary evidence.	Where a NAP applies across the country, this indicator is assessed at the national level. However, where states/provinces/territories are responsible for developing their own relevant plans, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.
1.3	Survivor and youth engagement			
1.3.1	National Survivors Council (NSC)	Does the country have a government-supported NSC that ensures survivor-led input on related planning and policy measures at the national level?	<p>To qualify, the country must have a government-supported NSC that ensures survivor-led input on related policy and planning measures at the national level. NSCs must be survivor-led, meaning they are composed primarily of individuals with lived experience (including survivors of childhood sexual violence) and reflect collective survivor leadership, rather than including one or two survivor representatives on a broader council. Alignment with key standards, including the Brave Movement's A Practical Guide for Creating Survivor Councils, was also considered.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where there was evidence that the government had taken meaningful steps to establish an NSC, such as public commitments, announcements or allocated funding, even if the council was not yet operational. A score of two was given where the NSC was operational, functioning as a formal body with an ongoing role. Only NSCs with formal government support were considered. This includes councils with an official mandate, financial backing and/or recognition through legislation or policy.</p> <p>Independent or NGO-led survivor groups without formal government support were not included, even where some engagement with government had taken place. Ad hoc consultations, one-off forums or informal engagement processes with survivors were not considered. Councils focused exclusively on the issue of human trafficking were also not considered.</p>	This indicator was scored at the national level for all countries, although examples from sub-national jurisdictions may be noted for reference.

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
1.3.2	Child engagement in national policy-making	Are there formal mechanisms through which children and adolescents can influence national child protection or violence prevention policies?	<p>To qualify, mechanisms must provide children and adolescents (under 18) with opportunities to influence national-level planning, policy or programme decisions related to child protection or violence prevention. Mechanisms could include formal bodies (eg, youth parliament) or recurring processes.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where engagement was ad hoc or informal, such as one-off consultations or participation in the development of a related NAP, or where a formal mechanism existed but it was unclear whether children were engaged specifically on child protection or violence prevention issues. A score of two was given where there was clear evidence of recurring or ongoing engagement, with structured opportunities for children to influence national policy in these areas.</p> <p>Ad-hoc youth engagement in the development of NAPs was only considered within a 10-year period (ie, 2015-present). Ad-hoc engagement that was broad in scope (such as general child empowerment), rather than specifically focused on child protection or violence, did not receive credit.</p> <p>Only mechanisms with clear government involvement or recognition were considered. NGO-led initiatives were not considered. Local or regional initiatives were excluded unless there was clear evidence that they fed into national-level policymaking. Initiatives that serve solely educational purposes were not considered (eg, internships). Engagement only involving young people over 18 was not considered (eg, youth caucuses).</p>	This indicator was scored at the national level for all countries, although examples from sub-national jurisdictions may be noted for reference.
1.4	Budgetary transparency	Is comprehensive budget information from the central government available to the public in a useful time frame?		
	Budgetary commitment to addressing SVAC	Does the national budget include a dedicated allocation for programmes that prevent and respond to SVAC?		

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
1.5	Data collection	Has the national government conducted, sponsored or endorsed a survey or study to explore the prevalence of SVAC, including online SVAC, in the last ten years?	<p>To qualify, surveys or studies must: have been conducted, sponsored or formally endorsed by the national government; be nationally representative; and published within the last ten years (2015-present). This includes nationally led studies as well as multi-country or externally led research (eg, by international organisations or academic institutions), provided there is clear evidence of government support or endorsement. Both stand-alone studies and modules within broader surveys were considered, as long as they included nationally representative data on the prevalence of SVAC; studies measuring sexual harassment alone were not considered.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where data were available on either offline or online (ie, technology-facilitated SVAC, such as online grooming, exploitation or abuse occurring through digital platforms) SVAC, but not both. A score of two was given where data on the prevalence of both online and offline SVAC were collected and published.</p> <p>Retrospective surveys asking adults about their childhood experiences were accepted, provided they captured experiences across childhood (from at least age 10). Studies focusing on a specific age group (eg, 15-17-year-olds) were assessed on a case-by-case basis and were included where they provided sufficient coverage (eg, multiple age groups or repeated data collection over time). Surveys that only included women or girls (ie, not boys and men) were not considered. Surveys focused on attitudes or perceptions alone were not considered.</p>	This indicator was scored at the national level for all countries, although examples from sub-national jurisdictions may be noted for reference.

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
2	Prevention			
2.1	Education for students	Does the national curriculum include life-skills-based sexuality and reproductive health education for lower-secondary students, including content that builds awareness of sexual violence?	<p>To qualify, the country's national curricula must include life-skills-based sexuality and reproductive health education content as a component for lower-secondary students (typically ages 11 to 14). The relevant content must be explicitly outlined within the national curriculum framework (or corresponding teacher guidance linked to it).</p> <p>One point was awarded based on the inclusion of each of the following topics in the national curricula: life-skills-based sexuality and reproductive health education (eg, condom use, puberty, reproductive health); content on child sexual abuse, such as awareness, identification and help-seeking; and online safety education, including risks of sexual abuse or exploitation through digital technologies.</p> <p>Curricula that were not publicly available were scored as zero. Only content specifically relevant to SVAC was considered; references to GBV or domestic violence alone did not receive credit. Abstinence-only education was not considered sufficient; curricula needed to include broader information, such as contraception and condom use, to receive credit. General online safety education, such as data privacy, cyber-bullying or media literacy, was not considered; curricula needed to specifically address the risks of SVAC through digital technologies.</p>	Where a country-wide national curriculum exists, this indicator is assessed at the national level. However, where a country's education system is decentralised, with states/provinces/territories responsible for developing their own curriculum requirements, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.
2.2	Parenting and care-giver support	Are home-visiting programmes and/or centre-based parenting support available in the country?		
2.3	Background checks	Does the country have strict criminal background check requirements for individuals working in direct contact with children?		

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
2.4	Training for healthcare providers	Does national legislation require pre-service or recurring training on SVAC for general medical doctors who provide primary care to children (eg, general practitioners or family physicians)?	<p>To qualify, national legislation must require pre-service or recurring training on SVAC for general medical doctors providing primary care to children. The requirement must be legally binding; voluntary, recommended or civil society-led training initiatives were not considered unless explicitly mandated by law or regulation.</p> <p>The training had to apply to general medical doctors in primary care settings (eg, general practitioners or family physicians); requirements limited to response professionals (eg, providers treating survivors) were not considered. The training requirement had to explicitly include SVAC; general training on child protection, GBV, childhood trauma, or broad mandatory reporting (ie, obligations to report child abuse) was not considered sufficient unless specific training on SVAC was clearly specified as a required component.</p>	In countries where training requirements are governed at the national level, this indicator is assessed nationally. However, where a country's healthcare system is decentralised, with each state/province/territory responsible for developing its own healthcare provider licensing requirements, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.
2.5	Availability of child helpline	Does the country have a nationwide, toll-free child helpline that provides support and counselling for children at risk of or experiencing violence, including sexual violence?	<p>To qualify, the country must have a nationwide, toll-free helpline specifically available to children and young people to offer support, advice and counselling based on their concerns, including concerns about violence. The service must be accessible free of charge at the point of use and available across the country. Both government-run and civil-society-led helplines were considered, provided they were functioning nationwide and met the criteria.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where a nationwide child helpline was available but with limitations, such as restricted operating hours or access only via voice calls. A score of two was given where the helpline operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and offered multiple access channels, such as voice- and text-based options including SMS, online chat, apps and/or social media, or in-person help desks (eg, at railway stations or bus terminals).</p> <p>Hotlines dedicated only to reporting abuse (eg, to the police or child welfare) were not considered; services functioning as both reporting hotlines and support helplines were included as long as the criteria of the indicator were met. The helpline had to be child-specific; general helplines for adults were not considered. Email-only options were not considered adequate as an alternative access channel."</p>	This indicator was scored at the national level for all countries, although examples from sub-national jurisdictions may be noted for reference.

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
3	Healing			
3.1	Medical care for victims and survivors	Does the country provide government-funded medical services for victims and survivors of sexual violence, including timely and free medical examinations, forensic evidence collection and related testing and treatment (eg, STI care, post-exposure prophylaxis [PEP], emergency contraception and injury care)?	<p>To qualify, the country must provide government-funded medical services for victims and survivors of sexual violence. Examples of core services considered include clinical medical examination and injury care, forensic evidence collection for criminal proceedings, testing and treatment for STIs including HIV testing and access to PEP, emergency contraception and pregnancy testing. Services may be delivered through general healthcare settings, such as hospitals or primary care facilities, or through specialised service points, such as sexual assault referral centres or one-stop centres.</p> <p>Higher scores were assigned where services were comprehensive across this full package of care, and consistently available across geographic areas including beyond major urban centres. Countries were down-scored when key components of care were missing, services were only available in limited locations or pilot sites or survivors faced costs for all or certain services. Scores were also reduced where access was constrained by procedural barriers (for example, requiring a police referral for a free forensic examination) or where services were not inclusive of all victims and survivors, such as provision limited to women and girls but not boys.</p> <p>The indicator focuses on availability, scope, affordability and geographic coverage in practice, rather than legal entitlements. Facilities that require out-of-pocket payment for examinations, forensic procedures, tests or essential treatment were not considered to be fully meeting the criteria. Services may be delivered directly by the government or through formal partnerships with civil society or non-governmental organisations (NGOs), provided there is clear government support, funding or integration into the national health system.</p>	Research and scoring reflects the overall national pattern in terms of access and quality of services, though examples from sub-national jurisdictions may be noted for reference.

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
3.2	Integrated victim and survivor services	Does the country provide government-funded multi-disciplinary or integrated services for victims and survivors of sexual violence (eg, psychosocial support, legal assistance, child protection and justice services) through a co-ordinated delivery model, including integrated one-stop or Barnahus-type services?	<p>To qualify, the country must provide government-funded multidisciplinary or integrated services for victims and survivors of sexual violence that bring together multiple sectors, such as health, psychosocial support and counselling, legal assistance, child protection and justice, through a coordinated delivery model. The indicator assesses the degree of coordination and integration across sectors, with particular attention to whether a range of services are delivered to survivors in a coordinated setting, such as through one-stop centres, child advocacy centres or Barnahus-type approaches, rather than systems that rely on informal or ad hoc referrals.</p> <p>Countries were scored lower where services exist across sectors but remain fragmented and delivered separately, where coordination is limited to referral pathways without structured integration, where integrated models exist only as small-scale pilots or donor-funded initiatives, or where services were not inclusive of all victims and survivors, such as provision limited to women and girls but not boys. Higher scores were assigned where integrated service models are institutionalised, government-led and implemented across multiple locations, with formalised cross-sector coordination and broader geographic availability beyond a small number of urban centres.</p> <p>The indicator focuses on availability, scope, affordability and geographic coverage in practice, rather than legal entitlements. Services may be delivered directly by the government or through formal partnerships with civil society or NGOs, provided there is clear government involvement, funding or integration into national systems.</p>	Research and scoring reflects the overall national pattern in terms of access and quality of services, though examples from sub-national jurisdictions may be noted for reference.

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
3.3	Health sector guidelines	Has the government, or an officially recognised body, issued national guidelines for the clinical and forensic evaluation of children and adolescents who may have experienced sexual violence, and do they provide guidelines on how to preserve evidence?	<p>To qualify, national guidelines must be issued or formally endorsed by a government entity or national forensic authority. Guidelines developed by civil society or international organisations were accepted only where there was clear evidence of government co-development, adoption or endorsement. The guidelines had to be publicly available through official sources.</p> <p>The guidelines must explicitly address the clinical and/or forensic evaluation of children and adolescents who may have experienced sexual violence. The guidelines had to be directed at medical providers or the health sector (rather than other stakeholders such as police or child welfare workers) and provide detailed guidance on the management of SVAC cases, including information on forensic examinations and the preservation of forensic evidence (eg, the use of rape kits, chain of custody procedures). This includes guidance comparable to international standards, such as the WHO Clinical Guidelines on Responding to Children and Adolescents who have been Sexually Abused.</p> <p>Documents focused only on adults were not considered, although broader guidelines were accepted if they included child-specific sections and information. In addition, guidelines limited to provision of care within a single setting (eg, one-stop centres), rather than those applicable to medical professionals more generally, were not considered.</p>	<p>In countries where guidelines for the health sector are generally developed and governed at the national level, this indicator is assessed nationally. However, where a country's healthcare system is decentralised, with each state/province/territory responsible for developing relevant guidelines, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.</p>

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
3.4	Legal aid	Are victims and survivors of sexual violence (especially children) entitled to government-funded legal aid/assistance in criminal proceedings?	<p>To qualify, the country must provide a legal entitlement for victims and survivors of sexual violence to government-funded legal aid/assistance in criminal proceedings. Given structural differences between legal systems, scoring was adapted accordingly, in line with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)'s Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems and the Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime. In civil law and hybrid systems, where victims and survivors may have a formal role in proceedings, a score of one was awarded where there was a clear entitlement to state-funded legal aid or representation. Related provisions were accepted where broader entitlements (eg, for all crime victims or children) clearly included victims and survivors of sexual violence.</p> <p>In common law systems, where victims and survivors are not typically parties to proceedings, a score of one was awarded where there was a legal entitlement to formal legal support for child victims during the justice process, such as a specially trained support person or guardian ad litem. The presence of a support person chosen informally by the child (eg, a parent or family member) did not qualify. Guardians ad litem were only considered where they could be appointed in criminal cases; provisions limited to civil or family proceedings were not considered. In cases where common law countries provided an entitlement to legal aid specifically for victims of sexual assault, the scoring process for civil law countries was applied.</p> <p>For all systems, credit was given where an entitlement existed, including where assistance must be requested by victims and survivors, their parents or guardians, or prosecutors. Legal aid schemes that were means-tested (ie, dependent on the financial status of the child or their family) were not given credit. Provisions limited to general legal advice, without explicit provision for representation in criminal proceedings, were excluded. Only entitlements established in law were considered; the existence of government-run helplines, legal aid clinics or other services in practice were considered. Legal aid mechanisms limited to specific sub-groups (eg, victims and survivors of trafficking) or to civil compensation claims were also excluded.</p>	Where legal entitlements to state-funded legal advice and/or representation are established and governed at the national level, this indicator is assessed nationally. However, where such entitlements are determined at the state/provincial/territorial level, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
3.5	Compensation	Does the country have mechanisms through which victims and survivors of SVAC can seek financial compensation?	<p>To qualify, the country must have avenues through which victims and survivors of SVAC can seek financial compensation. This includes any legal avenue that allows survivors to pursue compensation, whether through court processes or through dedicated compensation schemes. Mechanisms were considered as long as they applied to victims of crime generally and did not exclude children, or explicitly included child victims or victims and survivors of sexual violence.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where survivors could seek compensation through existing legal processes, but no dedicated state-funded compensation scheme was available. A score of two was given where a state-funded compensation scheme existed, allowing survivors to apply directly for compensation.</p>	In countries where laws and mechanisms for victim compensation are established and governed at the national level, this indicator is assessed nationally. However, where these are determined at the state/provincial/territorial level, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.
4	Justice			
4.1	Laws against corporal punishment	Has the country enacted legislation which prohibits all corporal punishment of children in all settings including the home?		
4.2	Legal minimum marriage age	Does the country have a minimum legal age for marriage of 18, and are exceptions excluded?		
4.3	Laws against childhood sexual violence			
4.3.1	Age of sexual consent	Does national legislation establish the age of sexual consent to be 18 for all individuals, with a close-in-age exemption for consensual sexual acts between peers?		
4.3.2	Contact sexual violence	Does national legislation criminalise contact SVAC?		
4.3.3	Non-contact sexual violence	Does national legislation criminalise non-contact SVAC?		

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
4.3.4	Intra-familial child sexual abuse	Does national legislation explicitly criminalise intra-familial child sexual abuse (ie, sexual abuse committed by a family member or care-giver)?	<p>To qualify, national legislation must explicitly criminalise sexual acts against children where the perpetrator is a family member or person in a care-giving role, either through specific statutes or through aggravated penalties.</p> <p>The assessment evaluated whether the legal framework explicitly recognises and criminalises sexual abuse within intra-familial or care-giving contexts, irrespective of the presence of force or coercion. It focused on relevant offences encompass both penetrative and non-penetrative sexual acts involving children, irrespective of consent. The scope of this indicator excludes other forms of abuse and exploitation (eg, trafficking, sale of children, and offences related to child sexual abuse material), including where such offences carry aggravating circumstances or enhanced penalties. Provisions predicated primarily on force or coercion (eg, general rape offences) were not considered.</p> <p>General aggravating factors (eg, abuse of authority or dependency) were accepted where they applied to relevant non-force-based child sexual abuse offences. In cases where intra-familial abuse was considered an aggravating factor, the aggravating penalty needed to be mandatory; cases where aggravated penalties were at the discretion or the judge did not receive full credit.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where legislation recognised intra-familial or care-giver abuse but with limitations. This includes laws that apply only to certain age groups (eg, only up to the age of consent rather than 18) or that cover only a limited range of family or care-giving relationships.</p> <p>A score of two was given where legislation provided broad and consistent coverage of intra-familial child sexual abuse. This required that sexual intercourse or equivalent offences with a child below the age of consent are punishable when committed by a family member or care-giver across all children under 18. Coverage had to extend beyond biological parents to include at least one additional category (eg, step-parents, extended family members or care-givers), or use sufficiently broad language (eg, “person having responsibility for the child’s upbringing”).</p> <p>Incest and domestic violence laws were considered only where they contained explicit provisions addressing sexual abuse of children within a familial context. Laws that referenced children but applied equally to adults within the same provision, without child-specific protections, were not included in the assessment.</p>	<p>In countries where the federal government has primary authority over criminal law and legislation is applied uniformly across all states/provinces/territories, this indicator is assessed based on federal law. However, where relevant offences are principally defined and prosecuted under sub-national law (eg, state or provincial law), the indicator is assessed based on the relevant sub-national jurisdiction. This applies even where federal law may apply in limited or exceptional circumstances (such as offences occurring on federal land).</p>

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
4.3.5	Positions of authority or trust	Does national legislation explicitly criminalise sexual acts against children if the perpetrator is in a position of trust, authority or influence over the child?	<p>To qualify, national legislation must explicitly criminalise sexual acts against children where the perpetrator is in a position of trust, authority or influence, either through specific offences or through aggravated penalties linked to such a position.</p> <p>The assessment focused on whether the legal framework explicitly recognises and criminalises abuse committed in contexts of trust, authority or influence, irrespective of the presence of force or coercion. It focused on relevant offences encompass both penetrative and non-penetrative sexual acts involving children, irrespective of consent. The scope of this indicator excludes other forms of abuse and exploitation (eg, trafficking, sale of children, and offences related to child sexual abuse material), including where such offences carry aggravating circumstances or enhanced penalties. Provisions predicated primarily on force or coercion (eg, general rape offences) were not considered.</p> <p>General aggravating factors (eg, abuse of authority or dependency) were accepted where they applied to relevant non-force-based child sexual abuse offences. In cases where intra-familial abuse was considered an aggravating factor the aggravating penalty needed to be mandatory; cases where aggravated penalties were at the discretion or the judge did not receive full credit.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where legislation recognised abuse of a position of trust, authority or influence, but with limitations. This includes laws that apply only to specific roles or settings (eg, only teachers or those working in schools) or only to certain age groups (eg, up to the age of consent rather than 18).</p> <p>A score of two was given where legislation provided broad and consistent coverage of abuse of a position of trust, authority or influence. This required that sexual intercourse or equivalent offences with a child below the age of consent are punishable when committed by a person in such a position across all children under 18. Coverage had to extend beyond a limited list of roles to include a wide range of positions (eg, teachers, coaches, religious leaders), or be framed using sufficiently broad language (eg, “person in a position of trust, authority or influence”).</p> <p>General abuse-of-authority provisions framed in broad or adult-oriented terms, without explicitly addressing children or child sexual abuse, were not considered. Provisions that provide aggravated penalties only in relation to roles not typically associated with direct contact or authority over children (eg, politicians or prison officials), while excluding more relevant roles such as teachers or care-givers, were also not considered.</p>	<p>In countries where the federal government has primary authority over criminal law and legislation is applied uniformly across all states/provinces/territories, this indicator is assessed based on federal law. However, where relevant offences are principally defined and prosecuted under sub-national law (eg, state or provincial law), the indicator is assessed based on the relevant sub-national jurisdiction. This applies even where federal law may apply in limited or exceptional circumstances (such as offences occurring on federal land).</p>

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
4.3.6	Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation	Does national legislation criminalise trafficking of children for sexual purposes?		
4.3.7	Sexual exploitation	Does national legislation include stand-alone provisions that it is an offence to sell/force a child into sexual exploitation for prostitution and to purchase sexual acts from a child?		
4.4	Laws against online childhood sexual violence			
4.4.1	Online grooming	Does national legislation criminalise online child grooming for sexual purposes?	<p>To qualify, national legislation must explicitly criminalise online child grooming for sexual purposes. The law did not need to use the term “grooming”, but had to clearly capture conduct such as enticing, soliciting or communicating with a child through electronic means for sexual purposes.</p> <p>One point was awarded for grooming legislation addressing each of the following: covering the intent to meet the child in person (or an equivalent “arranging a meeting” element); applying regardless of intent to meet, capturing grooming conduct that occurs entirely online; and providing a clear definition or description of grooming behaviour that includes a pattern of conduct intended to build trust or an emotional connection with a child to facilitate or encourage sexual activity or exploitation.</p> <p>To receive credit, the legislation had to explicitly apply to the online environment (eg, through references to “online”, “electronic communication” or “by any means”); provisions limited to in-person conduct were not considered. Provisions that only address showing pornography to a child were not considered. Provisions limited to soliciting a minor for the production of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) were not considered. Provisions limited to luring a child for the purposes of or facilitating sexual exploitation or prostitution were not considered.</p>	In countries where relevant criminal law exists at both national and sub-national levels, this indicator is primarily assessed based on national (federal) law, as online child grooming often involves conduct that crosses jurisdictions (eg, digital communication or solicitation). Where relevant, sub-national laws may also be considered, but primary emphasis is placed on federal legislation.
4.4.2	Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)	Does the country have legislation specific to CSAM, that covers technology-facilitated CSAM offences?		
4.4.3	Internet service provider (ISP) duty to report	Does national legislation require ISPs to report suspected CSAM to law enforcement or to some other mandated agency?		

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
4.5	Extraterritoriality and extradition	Does the country have appropriate extraterritoriality and extradition provisions for sexual exploitation of children (SEC) crimes?		
4.6	Statute of limitations (SOL) reform	Has the country eliminated the criminal statute of limitations for statutory rape (ie, sexual intercourse with a minor below the age of consent, where force or coercion is not an element of the offence)?	<p>To qualify, countries must have eliminated—or meaningfully extended—the SOL for statutory rape or its legal equivalent (ie, sexual intercourse/activity with a child below the age of consent, without requiring force or coercion).</p> <p>Scores were assigned based on the length of time in which criminal prosecution could be initiated: less than five years (0), five–10 years (1), 11–15 years (2), 16 years or more (3) and full elimination (5), where prosecution may be commenced at any time. An additional point was awarded where the limitations period did not begin until the victim reached the age of majority (or a later age specified by law), rather than starting at the time of the offence.</p> <p>Only criminal SOLs were assessed; civil SOLs were not considered. Countries with no criminal SOL framework received full credit. The comprehensiveness of the statutory rape provision was not considered in the scoring of this indicator (eg, whether it applies only to girls), as this was assessed under Indicator 4.3.1.</p>	<p>In countries where the federal government has primary authority over criminal law and legislation is applied uniformly across all states/provinces/territories, this indicator is assessed based on federal law. However, where relevant offences are principally defined and prosecuted under sub-national law (eg, state or provincial law), the indicator is assessed based on the relevant sub-national jurisdiction. This applies even where federal law may apply in limited or exceptional circumstances (such as offences occurring on federal land).</p>

No.	Indicator	Research question	Research guidance	Guidance for countries with federal/decentralised governance systems
4.7	Specialised law enforcement and international co-operation mechanisms			
4.7.1	Specialised law enforcement capacity	Does the country have specialised law enforcement mechanisms (eg, dedicated units, designated officers or child-focused intake points within police stations) to respond in a child-sensitive manner to cases of violence against children, including sexual violence?	<p>To qualify, there must be evidence of dedicated, specialist law enforcement capacity to respond to violence against children, including SVAC, in a child-sensitive manner. This may include dedicated units, designated officers or specialised intake points within police stations.</p> <p>A score of one was awarded where there was clear evidence of such specialised capacity at the national level, across the country, or in at least several parts of the country. This includes units or officers with a clear mandate to handle cases involving children or sexual violence, or personnel responsible for child-sensitive intake and initial response. Multi-mandate units (eg, those addressing family violence or violence against women and children) were accepted where violence against children, including sexual violence, was clearly within scope.</p> <p>Specialised intake mechanisms, such as child-friendly help desks or reception points within police stations, were accepted where there was evidence that designated personnel were responsible for engaging with children in a sensitive manner, even if they are not responsible for carrying out full investigations. Multi-disciplinary service models (eg, one-stop or child advocacy centres) were also considered, but only where law enforcement personnel were clearly integrated into the response.</p> <p>Mechanisms limited solely to online crimes against children were not sufficient on their own, but could be noted where broader capacity existed. Child protection or welfare services, as well as prosecution bodies, were not considered under this indicator unless there was a clear law enforcement or investigative component. Training requirements or legal obligations for police when handling such cases were not considered in the scoring of this indicator. Likewise, evidence of training alone was not sufficient for credit.</p>	Where specialised law enforcement mechanisms are established at the national level and apply across the country, this indicator is assessed at the national level. However, where policing structures are decentralised, with states/provinces/territories responsible for organising their own law enforcement units or designating specialised officers, the assessment reflects the relevant sub-national jurisdiction.
4.7.2	INTERPOL database	Is the country connected to INTERPOL's International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database?		
4.8	Special procedures for child victims in the criminal justice system	Does the national legislation provide special procedures for child victims in the criminal justice system, including child-friendly interviewing practices and protections for children providing testimony?		

Appendix 5: List of sub-national jurisdictions

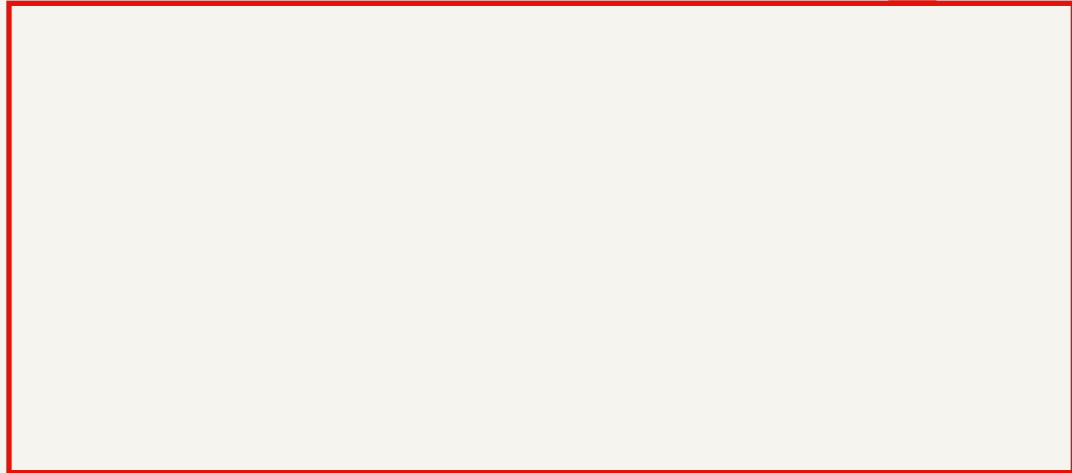
Country	Subnational jurisdiction of focus
Argentina	Salta
Australia	New South Wales
Brazil	Paraíba
Canada	British Columbia
Ethiopia	Afar
Germany	Niedersachsen
India	Tamil Nadu
Mexico	Guanajuato
Nepal	Lumbini
Nigeria	Ekiti
Pakistan	Punjab
Russia	Sakha Republic (Yakutia)
South Africa	KwaZulu-Natal
UAE	Ras Al Khaimah
US	Texas
UK	England
Venezuela	Falcón

Appendix 6: Data validation— participating countries

Country	Region
Argentina	Americas and the Caribbean
Brazil	Americas and the Caribbean
Canada	Americas and the Caribbean
Colombia	Americas and the Caribbean
El Salvador	Americas and the Caribbean
Guatemala	Americas and the Caribbean
Jamaica	Americas and the Caribbean
Mexico	Americas and the Caribbean
Australia	East Asia and Pacific
Indonesia	East Asia and Pacific
Malaysia	East Asia and Pacific
Mongolia	East Asia and Pacific
Côte d'Ivoire	Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa
Congo (Democratic Republic)	Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa
South Africa	Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa
Serbia	Europe and Central Asia
UK	Europe and Central Asia
Morocco	Middle East and North Africa
UAE	Middle East and North Africa
India	South Asia
Pakistan	South Asia

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