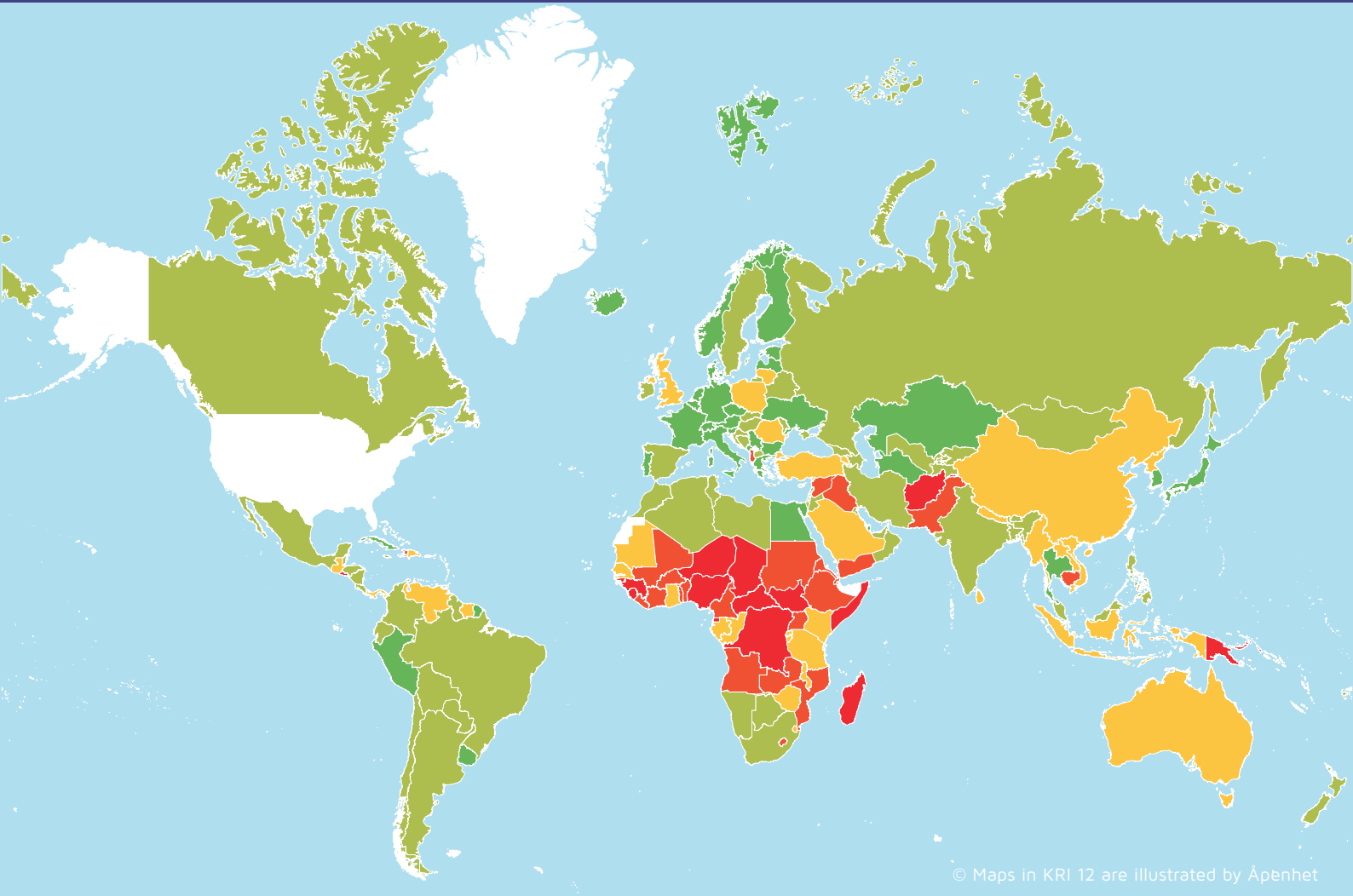




The KidsRights Index 2024

Report



THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX AND INFORMATION ABOUT ITS DOMAINS, INDICATORS AND METHODOLOGY
ARE ACCESSIBLE ON WWW.KIDSRIGHTSINDEX.ORG

ABOUT



KidsRights

KidsRights is an international non-governmental organization that promotes the wellbeing of vulnerable children across the world and advocates for the realisation of their rights. KidsRights strives for a world where all children have access to their rights and are empowered to realise the great potential they carry within them. KidsRights sees children as 'changemakers' who have the power to move the world and facilitates them in voicing their opinions and in taking action to bring about change.

KidsRights supports children by commanding global attention for the realisation of children's rights and by acting as a catalyst to ignite change, together with children and youths. This advocacy is supported with research and action. The KidsRights Foundation also finances local projects aimed at directly improving the rights of vulnerable children and stimulating child participation and changemaking by youths.

www.kidsrights.org 

Erasmus
School of
Economics



Erasmus School of Economics

Erasmus School of Economics (ESE) is a leading centre for scientific research and education in economics and econometrics. The activities of this internationally acclaimed School of Erasmus University Rotterdam contribute to understanding current and future economic developments in the world and to answering questions related to the roles of government and business policy.

<https://www.eur.nl/ease/english> 

International
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The International Institute of Social Studies

The International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) is a graduate school of critical policy-oriented social science. Established in 1952, ISS focuses on research, teaching, and public service in the field of development studies, societal change, and international cooperation. Its students, staff and knowledge partners are both from the Global South and the Global North. Interdisciplinarity and co-creation are key features of its work. ISS is part of Erasmus University Rotterdam but based in The Hague.

<https://www.iss.nl/en> 

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The KidsRights Index is the only annual global ranking on how countries worldwide are adhering to children's rights.

194
countries

Unique: Domain Child Rights Environment provides insight into the extent to which a country is equipped to carry out the UN CRC.

The goal of the KidsRights Index:
To stimulate compliance with children's rights worldwide.



ONLINE: the KidsRights Index is easily accessible on www.kidsrightsindex.org



The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is the global framework for children's rights.



1989

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

196
states



The KidsRights Index pools data from three reputable sources:



- 1 Quantitative data published and regularly updated by UNICEF <https://data.unicef.org>
- 2 UNDP www.hdr.undp.org/data
- 3 Qualitative data from the Concluding Observations by the **UN Committee on the Rights of the Child**.

The KidsRights Index: 20 indicators: 13 quantitative and 7 qualitative indicators

1. LIFE

- Under five mortality rate
- Life expectancy at birth
- Maternal mortality ratio



2. HEALTHCARE

- % of under five year olds suffering from under-weight
- Immunization of one year old children
- % of population using improved sanitation facilities (urban and rural)
- % of population using improved drinking water sources (urban and rural)



3. EDUCATION

- Expected years of schooling of girls
- Expected years of schooling of boys
- Gender inequality in expected years of schooling (absolute difference between girls and boys)



4. PROTECTION

- Child labour
- Adolescent birth rate
- Birth registration



5. CHILD RIGHTS ENVIRONMENT

- Non-discrimination
- Best interests of the child
- Enabling legislation
- Best available budget
- Respect for the views of the child/child participation
- Collection and analysis of disaggregate data
- State-civil society cooperation for child rights participation



The KidsRights Index is an initiative of the KidsRights Foundation, in cooperation with Erasmus University Rotterdam, Erasmus School of Economics and the International Institute of Social Studies.

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PREFACE



This year marks the launch of the 12th edition of the KidsRights Index, the world's first and only annual global index on children's rights. I deeply appreciate the hard work and dedication of Erasmus University and the KidsRights team.

With the inclusion of Liechtenstein, the KidsRights Index 2024 (KRI 12) delves into the state of children's rights in 194 countries, which is one more than in the previous (2023) edition. The KidsRights Index continues to monitor and assess the performance of countries against the child rights standards prescribed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Based on the original five domains - life, health, education, protection, and enabling environment we have a top 3 of Luxembourg, Iceland and Greece and the bottom 3 performers are Afghanistan, South Sudan and Chad.

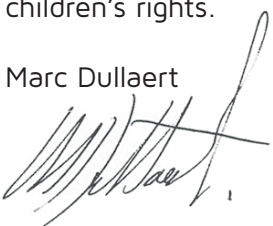
In addition to the original five domains - life, health, education, protection, and enabling environment, in this edition of the KidsRights Index, for the 2nd year in a row, we report on our efforts to create a 6th domain on climate change. This domain is based on the climate change mitigation efforts undertaken by the countries, from the perspective that climate change is a major risk to the realization of children's rights, at present already and all the more so in the future. With the (still experimental) inclusion of the climate change domain, Denmark, Finland and Luxembourg become the top 3 performers in the KidsRights Index, while Chad, Afghanistan and Niger become the bottom 3 performers.

The KidsRights Index 2023 reported on the polycrisis - war in Ukraine, rise in inflation, climate change-induced disasters and displacement, and the after-effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on children. This year, the situation for children is even more grim due to the persistence of the polycrisis. Escalation of armed conflicts, including in Ukraine, Gaza, Israel, and Sudan, is undermining decades of progress made towards protecting and providing for children and otherwise creating conditions for children to flourish. It is concerning that the year 2023 recorded a 21% spike in grave violations against children in conflicts. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we saw immunization in the global south dropping. While that negative trend seems to be reversing, currently Western Europe is falling back in immunization rates. The polycrisis is also resulting in a prolonged mental health crisis among children and youth globally.

So far, only 1 in 3 SDGs related to children have been met or are on track to be met by 2030, and only 1 in 4 children will live in countries where child-related SDGs will be met, leaving behind nearly 2 billion children.

Considering the exponential increase in the adverse impact of polycrisis on children, the need for a concrete recovery plan is pertinent. I believe that the findings and figures from the KidsRights Index will aid in crafting a robust recovery plan. I hope that policymakers, governments, civil society organisations, international press and the international community can utilise the Index to work towards upholding children's rights.

Marc Dullaert



Founder and Chairman KidsRights Foundation

1. INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT OF THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 2024 - PERSISTING POLYCRISIS

By Avinash Reddy Pichhili (KidsRights), Karin Arts (ISS), and Ujjwal Dubey (KidsRights), supported by data inputs by Mirthe Hendriks (ESE) and Philip Hans Franses (ESE).

Persisting polycrisis

Last year we sketched the current world's state of polycrisis for the first time as a main factor in causing children's rights problems and in determining the space for working on the realization of many aspects of children's rights globally. At present, while looking back at the year 2023 when launching the 2024 KidsRights Index, we can only conclude that this situation has become yet more grim. The heritage of the Covid-19 pandemic, for instance as regards mental wellbeing effects on children and youth, or in relation to their educational prospects, continues to be experienced. On the latter, as the United Nations observed in a 2023 report:

"Data show that school attendance does not necessarily lead to acquisition of foundational skills, with 600 million children and adolescents not acquiring foundational reading and math despite the majority of those attending schools. The pandemic worsened this situation, likely resulting in 11 million more 10-year-olds lacking foundational skills".¹

Among other issues, the Covid-19 pandemic, financial constraints resulting from, e.g., the high costs of energy, food, and other costs of living such as housing, had their effects. In addition, new political realities related to violent conflicts and to a rise of right-wing political leadership and anti-migration sentiments, are hindering the pursuit of children's rights in many locations.

Progress on Agenda 2030, and the specific Sustainable Development Goals relating to children contained therein, is lagging behind the high hopes that accompanied their articulation and adoption². While certainly progress has been made on important phenomena, such as under-5 child mortality (addressed in SDG target 3.2) which has declined by no less than 59 per cent since 2000,³ the overall progress in realizing Agenda 2030 relating to children is insufficient. As UNICEF has observed in 2023, only "approximately one in three child-related SDG indicators have either been met or are on track to be met (i.e., more than 50 per cent of their target value has already been accomplished)".⁴ This means that by "2030, only one in four children will live in countries where [only] 70 per cent of the child-related SDG targets will have been met".⁵ Self-evidently we owe the world's children better results and thus all who can contribute to making a positive difference must step up their efforts wherever possible.

Violent Conflict: Including in Gaza, Sudan and Ukraine

The year 2023 witnessed upsurges in prolonged armed conflicts globally, with an exponential increase in the instances and number of children directly and indirectly impacted. The latest annual United Nations report on 'children and armed conflict'⁶, reveals an alarming increase in the number of children directly impacted by armed conflicts around the world, with an utter disregard to the lives and living conditions of children.

1 UNICEF, 'Progress on Children's Well-being: Centring Child Rights in the 2030 Agenda – For Every Child a Sustainable Future', Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring (DAPM) – Data and Analytics Section, New York, September 2023', p. 3, emphasis added.

2 See e.g. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> and Karin Arts, 'Children's Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals', in Ursula Kilkelly and Ton Liefæard (eds.), *International Human Rights: International Children's Rights Law*, Springer, Singapore, 2019, pp. 537-561.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 1.

5 *Ibid.*

6 UN General Assembly Security Council, 'Children and Armed Conflict', UN Doc. A/78/842-S/2024/384, 3 June 2024, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/document/secretary-general-annual-report-on-children-and-armed-conflict-3/>.

In total, 32.990 grave violations of children's rights were verified by the UN report, of which 30.705 were recorded in 2023 alone, affecting 22.557 children.⁷ The number of grave violations in 2023 increased by over 21% in comparison to 2022 which had recorded a total of 27.180 grave violations.⁸ The nature of these violations includes the killing and maiming of children, which accounted for over 50% of affected children, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, abduction, and denial of humanitarian assistance. In stark contrast to the requirement of setting up safe spaces for children, the year 2023 witnessed as many as 1.650 attacks on schools and hospitals alone, putting children at a direct and grave risk of harm.⁹ This is despite the prohibition on targeting civilian objects during armed conflicts¹⁰ and the fact that schools must be considered as a civilian object in case of serious doubt.¹¹ Attacks on schools have lasting effects on the education rights of children, even post resolution of armed conflicts.¹² The recruitment of child soldiers and conflict-related sexual violence are widespread.¹³ In numerous armed conflicts health centres were targeted, thereby denying access to sexual and reproductive healthcare for children¹⁴.

Armed conflicts are rampant and hit children hard. This occurs in the first place in the form of the crude direct impact of war by child casualties. Recently, in his Global Update to the UN Human Rights Council, the current United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, revealed that in global conflicts in 2023 "the proportion of women killed (...) doubled and that of children tripled, compared to the year prior".¹⁵ The specifics of currently ongoing selected conflicts show a devastating picture. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), between 7 October 2023 and 19 June 2024 the war on Gaza resulted in over 37,000 fatalities, no less than 32 percent of these were children. In other words, 7,797 boys and girls were killed or died in Gaza in this period. Of the over 1,200 reported Israeli fatalities, at least 33, or 2,75 per cent, were children.¹⁶ According to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the armed conflict in Sudan puts: "24 million children (...) at risk of a generational catastrophe, and their rights to life, survival, protection, education, health, and development have all been gravely violated".¹⁷ In Ukraine, according to UNICEF, "since the escalation of the war in 2022, 1,957 children have been killed or injured". Since these numbers are unverified, the real total is likely (much) higher.¹⁸

7 *Ibid.*, para. 5.

8 UN General Assembly Security Council, 'Children and Armed Conflict', UN Doc. A/77/895-S/2023/363, 5 June 2023, para. 4, <https://undocs.org/en/A/77/895>.

9 *Ibid.*, para 4, p.13.

10 Captain D.M.L.G. (Dennis) Lemmens and captain F.J.M. (Fleur) de Boer, 'The Protection of Schools under International Humanitarian Law', *Netherlands Military Law Review*, 9 December 2020, https://puc.overheid.nl/mrt/doc/PUC_286172_11/.

11 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 'Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)', 8 June 1977, Article 52(3), <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/assets/treaties/470-AP-I-EN.pdf>.

12 Captain D.M.L.G. (Dennis) Lemmens and captain F.J.M. (Fleur) de Boer, 'The Protection of Schools under International Humanitarian', *Netherlands Military Law Review*, 9 December 2020, https://puc.overheid.nl/mrt/doc/PUC_286172_11/.

13 UN General Assembly Security Council, 'Children and Armed Conflict', UN Doc. A/78/842-S/2024/384, 3 June 2024, para. 11, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/document/secretary-general-annual-report-on-children-and-armed-conflict-3/>. Report of the General Secretary, 'Conflict-related Sexual Violence', UN Doc. S/2024/292, 4 April 2024, para. 9, <https://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?OpenAgent&DS=S/2024/292&Lang=E>.

14 UN General Assembly Security Council, 'Children and Armed Conflict', UN Doc. A/78/842-S/2024/384, 3 June 2024, para. 9, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/document/secretary-general-annual-report-on-children-and-armed-conflict-3/ibid>.

15 High Commissioner Volker Türk, 'We Must Urgently Find Our Way Back to Peace', global update to the 56th session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 18 June 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/06/we-must-urgently-find-our-way-back-peace-says-high-commissioner>.

16 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 'Reported Impact Snapshot - Gaza Strip', 19 June 2024, <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-19-june-2024>.

17 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 'Sudan Conflict: 24 Million Children Exposed to a Year of Brutality and Rights Violations, UN Committee Says', 18 March 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/sudan-conflict-24-million-children-exposed-year-brutality-and-rights>.

18 Munir Mammadzade (UNICEF Representative to Ukraine), 'Alarming Increase in Child Casualties in Ukraine as Deadly Attacks Continue', UNICEF, 13 April 2024, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/alarming-increase-child-casualties-ukraine-deadly-attacks-continue>.

The other impact of war on children obviously relates to the disruption of the families and societies they live in and the consequences that has for the provision of basic protection and services to children and for their mental wellbeing. The forced displacement, hunger, shortage of shelter, unavailability of water and medical services, destruction of schools, and other deprivations in Gaza is an unacceptable situation.¹⁹ The same applies to the situation in Sudan where, according to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 14 million children “are in dire need of humanitarian support, 19 million are out of school, and 4 million are displaced, according to UNICEF, making Sudan now the largest child displacement crisis in the world”.²⁰ And, their “conditions are appalling, with acute shortages of food and clean drinking water; UNICEF found that 3.7 million children are acutely malnourished, including 730,000 with severe acute malnutrition”.²¹ In January 2024, UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo, informed the UN Security Council of the intolerable impact of the Russian war on Ukraine and Ukrainian children in particular. According to DiCarlo, since February 2022:

“nearly two thirds of Ukraine’s children have been forced to flee their homes. An estimated 1.5 million children are at risk of post-traumatic stress and other mental health conditions, while 7,000 schools remain inaccessible to children, restricting their right to education”.²²

Humanitarian relief, at least in terms of food and medical supplies, must be prioritized for children,²³ but 2023 recorded a 32% increase in instances where humanitarian relief was denied.²⁴ Besides the selected conflicts referred to above, many other dire situations of armed conflict exist, such as in “Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Somalia, (...) the Syrian Arab Republic (...), among many other situations”.²⁵

The cascading effects of the intense impact of armed conflicts on children are likely to be felt for years to come. The traumatic events unfolding during conflicts and related forced displacement severely impacts the mental wellbeing of children.²⁶ The international community should reiterate and universally uphold its commitment to international humanitarian law and international human rights law to safeguard the rights of children and to minimise the impact of armed conflicts on their safety and wellbeing.

Navigating the Complexities of Childhood Immunization

In various earlier KidsRights Index reports we have drawn attention to the importance of child vaccination programmes and the challenges that, for example, the Covid-19 pandemic or situations of armed conflict pose to such programmes. Hence, we continue to follow developments in this realm. Childhood

19 See e.g. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), ‘Reported Impact Snapshot – Gaza Strip’, 19 June 2024, <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-19-june-2024>.

20 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), ‘Sudan Conflict: 24 Million Children Exposed to a Year of Brutality and Rights Violations, UN Committee Says’, 18 March 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/sudan-conflict-24-million-children-exposed-year-brutality-and-rights>.

21 Ibid.

22 United Nations Meetings Coverage Security Council, ‘Russian Federation’s War Having “Appalling Impact” on Ukraine’s Children, Under-Secretary-General Tells Security Council’, 9526th Meeting (AM), SC/15559, 10 January 2024, <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15559.doc.htm>.

23 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), ‘Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)’, 8 June 1977, Article 52(3), <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/assets/treaties/470-AP-I-EN.pdf>.

24 UN Secretary-General, ‘Children and Armed Conflict’, UN Doc. A/78/842-S/2024/384, 3 June 2024, para. 12, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/document/secretary-general-annual-report-on-children-and-armed-conflict-3/>.

25 Ibid., para. 4.

26 David Bürgin, Dimitris Anagnostopoulos, Benedetto Vitiello, Thorsten Sukale, Marc Schmid, and Jörg M. Fegert, ‘Impact of War and Forced Displacement on Children’s Mental Health-multilevel, Needs-oriented, and Trauma-informed Approaches’, *European Child Adolescent Psychiatry*, 31(6), 2022, pp. 845-853, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9209349/>.

immunization rates worldwide have seen fluctuations in recent years, influenced by a myriad of factors encompassing logistical hurdles, public perceptions of vaccine safety, and efficacy. Across various regions, both challenges and successes shape the landscape of immunization efforts.

While further down in this report specific country-level changes in scores on immunization efforts will be presented, the data gathered for the 2024 KidsRights Index also provide insight into region-level developments. It is striking that, of all nine regions²⁷ covered in the Index, Western Europe and the Middle East clearly show the least progress in immunization rates. Only 26 per cent of the Western European countries covered recorded an increase in immunization rate, while 32 per cent recorded a decline. For the region of the Middle East and North Africa, 16 per cent of the countries involved recorded an increase in immunization rate, while 26 per cent recorded a decline. Overall, this makes these two relatively affluent regions stand out negatively as compared to all other regions. Six of such other regions showed improvement in between 41 and 52 per cent of the countries located in those regions, and maximally even 100 per cent (but that is for the North American region, consisting of Canada only which improved its child immunization rate by 2%). Declining immunization rates are on record for 12,5 per cent of countries in South Asia, 20 per cent for Eastern and Southern Africa, 23 per cent for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 25 per cent for West and Central Africa, 32 per cent for East Asia and the Pacific, and 36% for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Explanations for the currently existing situations and trends are highly contextual, and so are the possible remedies. Therefore, a closer look into specific country experiences, both positive and negative ones, is always useful. While we are not able to do a deep dive into such experiences in this report, we do refer the reader to a range of potentially relevant examples.

On the positive side:

- in Malta, a proactive National Immunization Service seeks to ensure accessibility to vaccines across all age groups, showcasing high uptake rates, including for COVID-19 vaccinations;²⁸
- Mauritius has witnessed an uptick in immunization rates which is attributed to government initiatives bolstering public health amid economic strains and the pandemic;²⁹
- effective community outreach and collaboration between health authorities and local communities are reported as having propelled Samoa's immunization rates;³⁰
- Vanuatu's success is credited to multifaceted approaches including partnerships, community education, and streamlined healthcare services;³¹
- South Sudan's progress is marked by collaboration with international organizations like WHO and

27 See Annex 2 for the full details.

28 Government of Malta, 'The Primary Child and Youth Health and Immunisation Unit', last updated November 2021, <https://healthservices.gov.mt/en/phc/pchyhi/Pages/PCYHIU.aspx>.

29 Africa Press, 'Budget 2023-2024 Reflects Mauritius Government's Philosophy to Protect and Support the Population, States Prime Minister', 4 June 2023, <https://www.africa-press.net/mauritius/all-news/budget-2023-2024-reflects-mauritius-governments-philosophy-to-protect-and-support-the-population-states-prime-minister>.

30 UNICEF Pacific Islands, 'Parents, Health Workers and the Community Playing their Part to Build Back Immunity', 29 April 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/stories/parents-health-workers-and-community-playing-their-part-build-back-immunity>.

31 Rebecca Olul, 'Protecting Children from Vaccine-preventable Diseases in Vanuatu', UNICEF Pacific Islands, 18 February 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/stories/protecting-children-vaccine-preventable-diseases-vanuatu>; World Health Organization and UNICEF, 'Vanuatu: WHO and UNICEF Estimates of Immunization Coverage: 2022 revision', 1 July 2023, https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/country-profiles/immunization/2023-country-profiles/immunization_vut_2023.pdf.

UNICEF, alongside support from Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI);³²

- similarly, Myanmar's strides seem to owe much to international backing, particularly from GAVI;³³
- Montenegro's success reportedly hinges on healthcare worker commitment and parental engagement, supported by government-led campaigns;³⁴
- Liberia's modest improvement is attributed to increased coverage and strategic support from international agencies³⁵

Conversely, the Cook Islands have seen a decline, an example which highlights the importance of addressing logistical challenges and public perceptions.³⁶ Sweden has recently witnessed vaccine hesitancy amid concerns over safety and misinformation.³⁷ Challenges also persist in countries like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, grappling with pandemic disruptions,³⁸ and Syria, plagued by conflict-related hurdles.³⁹ El Salvador reportedly faces financial and logistical constraints alongside socio-cultural factors hindering coverage.⁴⁰

Thus, the global narrative of childhood immunization underscores a spectrum of obstacles and achievements. While some nations showcase commendable progress through proactive measures often supported by international cooperation, others confront persistent challenges stemming from conflicts, economic instability, and vaccine hesitancy. To ensure equitable access to life-saving vaccines for all children, concerted efforts at local, national, and international levels are imperative. By addressing challenges head-on and leveraging successful strategies, the global community can strive towards a healthier, immunized future for children worldwide.

KidsRights Index 2024

Against the above background, and after a basic introduction of the KRI in the subsequent section of this report, we present the specific findings of the Kids Rights Index 2024 (reporting developments up to the end of 2023). Obviously, climate change remains another core element of the world's state of polycrisis. After the section reporting our 2024 regular KidsRights Index findings, we will therefore share a second progress report on our efforts to integrate a new climate change domain into the Index.

32 World Health Organization South Sudan, 'South Sudan Commemorates 50 Years of Immunization with 2024 Immunization Week', 30 April 2024, <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/south-sudan/news/south-sudan-commemorates-50-years-immunization-2024-african-immunization-week-humanly-possible>.

33 United Nations in Myanmar, 'UN in Myanmar is Supporting Essential Health Services for children, including Immunization, amid COVID-19 Response', 25 June 2020, <https://myanmar.un.org/en/50722-un-myanmar-supporting-essential-health-services-children-including-immunisation-amid-covid-19>; UNICEF Myanmar, 'Humanitarian Situation Report No. 2', April 2024, <https://www.unicef.org/myanmar/reports/unicef-myanmar-humanitarian-situation-report-no-2>.

34 UNICEF Montenegro, 'Mutual Trust and Partnership with Parents Key to the Success of Routine Immunization', 25 May 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/stories/mutual-trust-and-partnership-parents-key-success-routine-immunization>.

35 Ministry of Health and UNICEF, 'Immunization Coverage and Equity Analysis', December 2023, <https://moh.gov.lr/wp-content/uploads/Liberia-EPI-Equity-Assessment-Report-2024.pdf>; UNICEF, 'Country Office Annual Report: Liberia 2023', no date, <https://www.unicef.org/media/152991/file/Liberia-2023-COAR.pdf>.

36 World Health Organization, 'Cook Islands: WHO and UNICEF Estimates of Immunization Coverage: 2022 Revision', 8 July 2021, https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Cook%20Islands/Immunization-coverage-estimates-2020_cok.pdf.

37 Kelly Whitener and Alexandra Corcoran, 'Decline in Routine Childhood Vaccinations Puts Children, Families and Communities at Risk of Outbreak', Center for Children and Families, 15 July 2021, <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2021/07/15/decline-in-routine-childhood-vaccinations-puts-children-families-and-communities-at-risk-of-outbreak/>.

38 Ridwan Gustiana, 'Lifesaving Immunization Services Continue for children in Democratic Republic of Korea', UNICEF East Asia and Pacific, 10 June 2020, <https://www.unicef.org/eap/stories/lifesaving-immunization-services-continue-children-democratic-republic-korea-dpr-korea>.

39 World Health Organization, 'Syrian Arab Republic: WHO Health Emergency Appeal 2024', 15 January 2024, <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/syria-who-health-emergency-appeal-2024>.

40 UNICEF, 'Country Office Annual Report: El Salvador 2023', no date, <https://www.unicef.org/media/152396/file/El-Salvador-2023-COAR.pdf>.

2. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX

2.1 What is the KidsRights Index?

The KidsRights Index⁴¹ is published every year. It is based on the almost universally ratified United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).⁴² The Index synthesizes and ranks the children's rights performance records of states parties⁴³ to the CRC in relation to the most crucial aspects of children's lives for which global and comparable data is available. A particularly distinctive feature of the Index is its Domain 5. This Domain charts in particular how states are faring in creating the conditions that need to be in place for realizing children's rights and/or for making children's rights policies and putting them into effect. In other words, Domain 5 assesses how states are doing in providing the 'enabling environment' for children's rights required by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Overall, the KidsRights Index presents an accessible, general, and comparative overview of state performance on selected children's rights. It also creates a basis for making concrete and evidencebased recommendations on how governments might improve on various children's rights matters.

2.2 The methodology of the KidsRights Index (Domains and Indicators)

From the start, the original intention of the creators of the KidsRights Index was to develop a fully comparable measure of state performance on children's rights, available for as many States Parties to the CRC as possible. Specific child rights issues, such as child marriage or the situation of children in armed conflict, are much more prevalent in some countries than in others. This makes it difficult to come to a fair comparison between countries when scoring such issues in an index. In addition, the insufficient or non-availability of data on certain specific issues (such as violence against children, or the treatment of refugee children) makes it hard to measure those issues and/or to come to adequately comparable results.

Therefore, the KidsRights Index focuses on more generic issues which in principle are equally relevant for all states parties to the CRC and for which, on the whole, reliable data are available. The KidsRights Index is the outcome of an integrated analysis of existing, high-quality data published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.⁴⁴

The Index covers the following five Domains:

1. Right to Life
2. Right to Health
3. Right to Education
4. Right to Protection
5. Enabling Environment for Child Rights

Twenty indicators together cover and measure these five Domains. Thirteen indicators are quantitative

⁴¹ Hereafter also referred to as the 'Index'.

⁴² UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, p. 3, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

⁴³ The term 'state party' refers to states that have formally bound themselves to the CRC (through ratification or accession). Since 2015, this is the case for 196 states. The USA remains the only state that did not follow up on its signature with a ratification.

⁴⁴ These data are drawn from <https://data.unicef.org/>, www.hdr.undp.org/data, and the 'Concluding Observations' published by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child at the end of the periodic state reporting procedure for all states that are legally bound by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The latter are available at https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en.

and seven are qualitative. The data collected is systematically rated for all the countries included in the Index, by applying a standard calculating method. Countries are ranked on each of the five Domains, which in turn generates a comprehensive overall ranking. Further information on the sources of the data used can be found in the background section of this Report. An overview of all indicators and their precise meaning or content is presented in Annex 3 to this Report. Further specifications on the calculation of scores are provided in the next sub-sections of this Report (2.2.1-2.2.3).

2.2.1. Calculation of scores Domain 5

Domain 5, or the 'Enabling Environment for Children's Rights', is an important and unique Domain of the KidsRights Index. Closely based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it reveals to what extent countries have operationalized the Convention's general principles and the state of their basic 'infrastructure' for making and implementing children's rights policies. The scores on Domain 5 are derived from the Concluding Observations (COs) adopted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. These COs are the final product of the state reporting procedure that monitors how states are doing in implementing the Convention. They communicate the views of the CRC Committee on the level of realization of children's rights achieved in a particular country and period of time.

The specific scores on Domain 5 are generated as follows. First, the Committee's Concluding Observations are analyzed for remarks about a country's performance on the seven selected indicators that make up Domain 5:

- 1. Non-discrimination;**
- 2. Best interests of the child;**
- 3. Respect for the views of the child/child participation;**
- 4. Enabling national legislation;**
- 5. Mobilization of the 'best available' budget;**
- 6. Collection and analysis of disaggregated data; and**
- 7. State-civil society cooperation for children's rights.**

These seven selected indicators together represent what can be seen as the general enabling environment, or 'infrastructure' for children's rights that every State Party to the CRC is expected to have in place. The first three (non-discrimination, best interests, and child participation) are general principles of the Convention.⁴⁵ The last four (legislation, budget, data, and state civil society collaboration) represent basic elements or tools that states must mobilize to be able to make and carry out child rights policies and to trigger child rights practice. This set of requirements can be applied to all countries in the world, is equally relevant to all countries in the world, and crucial for creating capacity to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Thus, they form a pertinent and fully comparable measure for children's rights performance.

For each of the above seven indicators, countries are scored on a scale between 1 and 3. The actual score assigned for each indicator is exclusively based on the language used by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its Concluding Observations. A score of 1 (or 'bad') means that the Committee made exclusively negative remarks. A score of 2 (or 'average') implies that the Committee made both negative and positive remarks. A score of 3 (or 'good') means that the Committee presented positive

⁴⁵ These general principles were identified by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and are supposed to be leading considerations in all CRC implementation efforts. Survival and development of children has been identified as another general principle of the Convention. However, this is of a different (including more substantive) nature than the three other general principles mentioned, and in fact only fully pursued through realizing the Convention as a whole. In that spirit, the general principle of survival and development is integrated into the KidsRights Index via Domains 1 to 4 and not addressed separately again in Domain 5.

remarks only. In case the Committee did not address a particular indicator in the Concluding Observations on a particular country, the score of NA (for 'not addressed') applies.

The scoring for Domain 5 is performed separately and independently by two researchers. If upon comparison of their scores it turns out that there are differences between them (which happens relatively rarely because the scoring system is simple and in most cases its application is straightforward), the final score is determined jointly, in consultation between the two researchers. The specific text in the Concluding Observations on which the scores are based is made available in a overview table publicly available at <https://www.kidsrights.org/research/kidsrights-index/reports-and-publications/>. These scores are then standardized into a mean of the scores received.

2.2.2. Calculation of score Domain 1-4

The scores for Domains 1 to 4 are also calculated as the mean of the scores on the underlying indicators. These scores are standardized between a minimum of 0.01 and a maximum of 1. If scores are missing for particular indicators, then the Domain score is calculated over the score of the remaining indicators. However, a country is not included in the overall Index if the score on Domain 5 'Enabling Environment for Child Rights' is missing, or if more than half of all the Domain scores are missing. The score for a particular Domain is not calculated if there is data missing for more than half of the indicators in that Domain.

2.2.3. Calculation of overall scores, ranks and clusters

The total score of the KidsRights Index is calculated as the geometric mean of the scores on the five specific Domains. In general, the geometric mean is used instead of the arithmetic mean, because this makes it more difficult to compensate for low scores on specific Domains. This is justified by the argument that such a compensation is not desirable, because all the children's rights aspects covered are considered equally important. Therefore, an extremely low score in one area of children's rights, for example on providing an 'enabling environment for children's rights', cannot be compensated by a high score, for instance, on 'education'.

The Index is a ranked list of countries, with colour-coding indicating relevant clusters of rankings. There are five different clusters (see figure 1 below). Each cluster displays a similar performance level. This means that each cluster represents countries for which the scores are in the same range, for example 0.991 to 981. Within a cluster, the scores of countries are more similar than across clusters. The clusters are expressed in coloured world maps on <https://www.kidsrights.org/research/kidsrights-index/>.



Figure 1. Colour-coding indicating relevant clusters of rankings

3. THE SPECIFIC RESULTS OF THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 12 (2024)

3.1 Overall ranks and score analysis

3.1.1. Top ten countries in KRI 12

OVERALL TOP TEN COUNTRIES – KRI 12		
Rank	Country	KRI 12 Score
1	Luxembourg	0,885
2	Iceland	0,884
3	Greece	0,878
4	Germany	0,874
5	Thailand	0,867
6	Slovenia	0,861
7	Finland	0,859
8	Belgium	0,858
9	Denmark	0,858
10-11	Austria	0,854
10-11	Norway	0,854

Table 1: Overall Top Ten countries in KRI 12

Notably, after having been at the top of the KidsRights Index 11 (2023), **Sweden** fell steeply to be ranked at 78 in this year's KidsRights Index. **Luxembourg** has moved up by three ranks to top the KRI 12.

Sweden

Sweden ranks 78th in the KRI 12, after having been at the top of the KidsRights Index in 2023 and, except for the results of 2016 and 2018, consistently in the top ten since the start of the Kids Rights Index project. The primary cause behind this drop is its below par performance in Domain 5 – the Enabling Environment for children's rights as Sweden fell by 122 ranks (to 167th out of 194 countries) in this domain in KRI 12.

Based on the latest Concluding Observations issued by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child,⁴⁶ Sweden received the lowest possible indicator score (1 on a scale of 3) for 3 of the 7 indicators measured in Domain 5 of the KRI 12: 'best interests of the child', 'respect for the views of the child', and 'enabling legislation'. This is despite the formal integration of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Swedish domestic law in 2020.⁴⁷

The Swedish National Audit Office (NAO) recently published an audit report on Sweden's implementation of the UNCRC arriving at similar observations as the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – amounting to Sweden's ineffective implementation of the UNCRC.⁴⁸ The concerns raised by the NAO primarily relate to the lack of clarity and guidance in the procedures and measures to be undertaken for incorporating a child-rights perspective in the working of the government and its agencies.⁴⁹ The NAO also emphasized the need for clearer instructions to incorporate a child rights perspective into legislative processes and discourse.⁵⁰

46 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports of Sweden', UN Doc. CRC/C/SWE/CO/6-7, 7 March 2023.

47 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Act (2018:1197).

48 Riksrevisionen (Swedish National Audit Office), 'State efforts to strengthen compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child – high ambitions but inadequate implementation', 10 May 2024, https://www.riksrevisionen.se/download/18.6577d28918f537179812d27a/1715342071715/RiR_2024_5_summary.pdf.

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.* p. 3.

Belgium broke into the top ten - thanks to an improvement of 10 ranks, climbing from the 18th position in KRI 11 (2023) to 8th in KRI 12. Belgium ranked 28th in the KRI 10 (2022) and has since improved its ranking by ten ranks each and now features in the top 10 of KRI 12. Similarly, **Greece** has consistently improved its ranking from being 32nd in KRI 10 (2022) to 6th in KRI 11 (2021), and 3rd this year. **Austria** moved up one rank from 11th to 10th - and thus now too features in the top ten of the KidsRights Index.

The overall score of the top-ranked country has reduced significantly from 0.913 in KRI 11 to 0.885 this year. At the same time, the overall score of the lowest ranked country has improved from 0.197 in KRI 11 to 0.209 at present. While obviously significant performance differences remain, this trend in scores suggests a reduction of the gap in the overall scores between the highest and lowest performing countries.

3.1.2. Bottom ten countries in KRI 12

OVERALL BOTTOM TEN COUNTRIES – KRI 12		
Rank	Country	KRI 12 Score
194	Afghanistan	0,209
193	South Sudan	0,224
192	Chad	0,244
191	Central African Republic	0,266
190	Equatorial Guinea	0,290
189	Guinea	0,291
188	Madagascar	0,313
187	Niger	0,314
186	Democratic Republic of the Congo	0,324
185	El Salvador	0,332

Table 2: Overall Bottom Ten countries in KRI 12

Afghanistan has become the least ranked country in KRI 12, replacing **Chad** which had been the least ranked country consistently for the previous four years, that is from 2020 to 2023.

The **Democratic Republic of Congo** and **El Salvador** have entered the list of the countries ranked at the bottom ten in the Index. They replaced **Sierra Leone** and **Somalia** which have moved up from KRI 11, by 5 ranks and 3 ranks respectively.

3.1.3. Average scores of the top and bottom ten in KRI 12

The average of the overall scores of the top 10 countries in KRI 12 dropped to 0.868, compared to 0.896 in KRI 11. On the other hand, the average of the overall scores of the bottom 10 countries in KRI 12 has slightly improved to 0.281 in KRI 12, compared to 0.268 in KRI 11. Overall, this indicates a relatively poorer performance on safeguarding children's rights by the top ten ranked countries, and a relatively slightly improved performance by the bottom ten ranked countries.

3.1.4. Biggest movers in the overall rankings of KRI 12

Climbers

New Zealand is the biggest gainer of all in the overall rankings of the KidsRights Index this year. It has climbed 116 ranks, to the 62nd position in the Index from its earlier ranking of 178th in KRI 11 (2023).

New Zealand's overall KRI 12 score improved by over 90% in comparison to its score in KRI 11.

New Zealand

New Zealand has made significant strides in the KidsRights Index 2024. It improved its overall ranking in KRI 12 by 116 ranks and achieved a position of 62nd with a score of 0.742. This is a substantial improvement from its previous rank of 178th and a score of 0.390 in KRI 11. Due to the outcome of the latest state reporting procedure (in 2023), the Enabling Environment Domain, or Domain 5, based on the new Concluding Observations adopted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has witnessed notable progress. This resulted in an improvement of 31 ranks to the 159th position in Domain 5. On three out of the seven evaluated indicators in this domain ('enabling legislation', 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data', and 'best available budget/resources for children') New Zealand improved from the lowest score of 1 to the middle score of 2. Consequently, New Zealand has climbed two clusters - from the 4th cluster in KRI 11 to the 2nd cluster in KRI 12.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child specifically welcomed the requirement that persons exercising powers under the Oranga Tamariki Act and the Children's Act must be guided by the UNCRC.⁵¹ It also appreciated New Zealand for prioritizing child well-being indicators in the budget statement,⁵² and the legal obligation to "collect and report on data on outcomes for children".⁵³

However, concerns remain about the prevalence of discriminatory practices against vulnerable children, the implementation of the best interests of the child principle, and with respect to the right of children to be heard in matters concerning them.⁵⁴ There are also serious concerns regarding the recent Bill to repeal Section 7AA of the Oranga Tamariki Act – a provision that was inserted in 2019 to address the overrepresentation of Māori children in State care and to ensure that Māori children grow up in their own community.⁵⁵

Similarly, after its 2023 CRC state reporting round, the **United Kingdom** moved up 43 ranks from being 179th in the KidsRights Index 2023 to 137th at present. The UK's overall score in this year's Index improved by nearly 53% against its overall score in 2023.

Descenders

Albania shows the highest reduction in the overall rankings this year. The country fell by 95 ranks, from the 59th position in 2023 to the 154th in 2024. **Turkey** witnessed the second biggest reduction in overall rankings. It fell 92 ranks from 21st in 2023 to 113th this year.

As noted earlier, **Sweden** fell by 77 ranks, from the first position in 2023 to the 78th this year. **São Tome and Principe**, **Mauritius** and **Oman** fell by 61, 53 and 51 ranks respectively compared to their rankings in the 2023 KidsRights Index.

51 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of New Zealand', UN Doc. CRC/C/NZL/CO/6, 28 February 2023, para. 7.

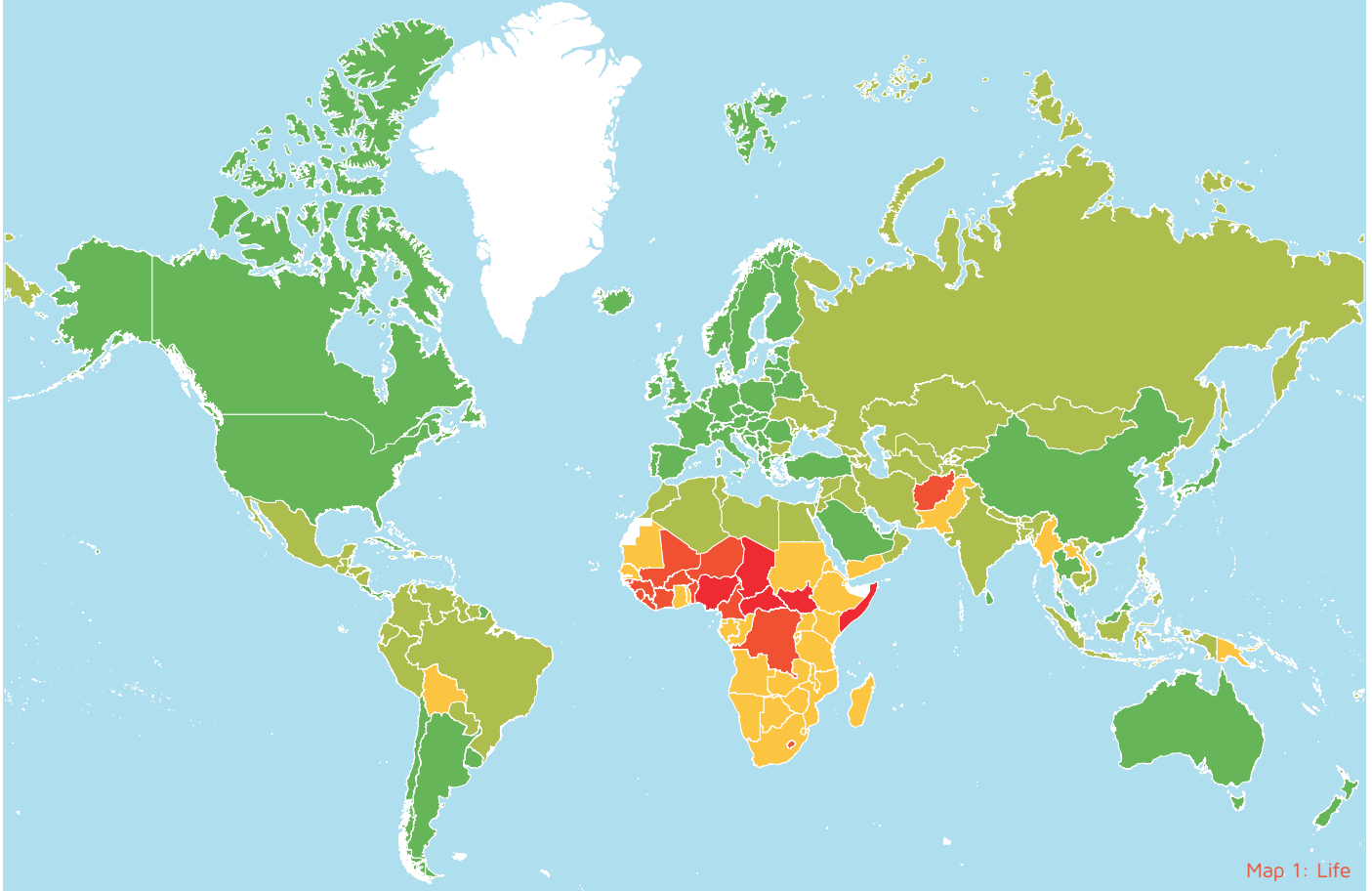
52 *Ibid.*, para. 10.

53 *Ibid.*, para. 11.

54 *Ibid.*, para. 15, 17 and 19.

55 Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children (New Zealand), Section 7AA Report 2023: Improving Outcomes for Tamariki Māori and Their Whānau, Hapū and Iwi', Wellington, no date, https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/About-us/Performance-and-monitoring/Section-7AA/7AA-Web_V5.pdf.

3.2 Domain 1: Life⁵⁶



After entering the KRI for the first time in 2023, Monaco remains the best performer in the Domain 'Life' for the second consecutive year. There are no significant movements in the top ten of the Domain 'Life' compared to KRI 11. All the countries that featured in the top ten of the Domain Life in KRI 11 do so in KRI 12 as well.

The following table presents the top ten countries in the Domain 'Life' in this year's KidsRights Index (KRI 12).

Countries	Life Rank KRI 12	Life Score KRI 12
Monaco	1	0,995
Japan	2	0,986
Australia	3	0,979
Switzerland	4	0,973
Republic of Korea	5	0,972
Norway	6	0,971
Sweden	7	0,967
Malta	8	0,966
Spain	9	0,966
Italy	10	0,965

Table 3: Top Ten countries in Domain Life

⁵⁶ Maps in KRI 12 are illustrated by Åpenhet, <https://openhet.com/>

There have been no updates to the underlying data for the indicators 'Under 5 Mortality' and 'Life Expectancy', since KRI 11. This year new underlying data is available for the indicator 'Maternity Mortality Rate (MMR)'.⁵⁷

3.2.1. Big movers in the Domain Life

Climbers

Seychelles has climbed 16 ranks in the Domain 'Life', most of all countries, from the 100th position in 2023 to 84th in 2024. This made up again for a drop of 12 ranks in this domain in 2023. This improvement can be directly attributed to its impressive performance on the maternal mortality ratio (MMR). As per the underlying data, in Seychelles this ratio decreased by a massive 95% as compared to the previously available data, i.e. from 53 deaths per 100.000 live births to only three such deaths.

Similarly, the **United Republic of Tanzania** has climbed 16 ranks in this domain, from 164th to 148th, also after it had dropped by 10 ranks last year. The MMR in the **United Republic of Tanzania** decreased by nearly 55%. Despite this improvement, its MMR still stands at 238 deaths per 100.000 live births. Nevertheless, maternal deaths in the **United Republic of Tanzania** nearly halved over the past two decades. While 11.000 maternal deaths were recorded in the year 2000, the latest data shows a reduction to 5.400 deaths.⁵⁸ Ongoing efforts to strengthen the country's health system by Tanzania's Ministry of Health and various stakeholders may have contributed to this improvement in its MMR.⁵⁹ Targeted initiatives, such as the UN's Kigoma Joint Programme I and II spanning the period 2017 to 2027, continue to improve access to maternal healthcare services among other things.⁶⁰ The support includes distribution of ultrasound equipment to detect pregnancy anomalies in the early stages, trainings for healthcare providers, and increasing the fleet of ambulances.⁶¹ **Bhutan** and **Ethiopia** have also moved up in the Domain 'Life' by 11 and 10 ranks respectively.

In this year's Index, **Mauritania** and **Trinidad and Tobago** have each improved their ranking in the Domain 'Life' by nine ranks when compared to KRI 11. Trinidad and Tobago, which had already improved by six ranks in this domain in KRI 11, shows a consistent trajectory of improvement. **Peru**, which had dropped by 27 ranks in the Domain 'Life' in KRI 11, recovered by 9 ranks in this domain in KRI 12.

Descenders

Vietnam has dropped by 16 ranks – the most of all in Domain 'Life' – from 89th in KRI 11 to 105th in KRI 12. MMR in Vietnam increased by more than 188%, from 43 to 124. The number of maternal deaths in **Vietnam** reduced from 1400 to 1100 between the years 2000 and 2005. However, it has been on a rise since, increasing to 1300 deaths in 2010, 1700 deaths in 2015 and 1800 deaths as per the latest data⁶². While the MMR was reported to be as low as 46 in 2021,⁶³ concerns remained about the high prevalence

57 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and UNPD (MMEIG), 'Estimates of Country-level Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR; maternal deaths per 100,000 live births)', February 2023, https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/MMR-maternal-deaths-and-LTR_MMEIG-trends_2000-2020_released-Feb_2023.xlsx.

58 Ibid.

59 World Health Organization, 'Stakeholders Commit to Ensure Zero Maternal Deaths in Tanzania', 21 November 2023, <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/united-republic-of-tanzania/news/stakeholders-commit-ensure-zero-maternal-deaths-tanzania>.

60 United Nations Tanzania, 'Kigoma Joint Programme Phase Two (KJP II) – Factsheet', <https://tanzania.un.org/en/download/138187/239593>.

61 World Health Organization, 'WHO Donates Ambulances to Reduce Maternal Deaths in Tanzania', 6 June 2023, <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/united-republic-of-tanzania/news/who-donates-ambulances-reduce-maternal-deaths-tanzania>.

62 UNICEF, 'Maternal Deaths – Country-level Trends in Estimates of Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), Maternal Deaths and Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death, 2000-2020', February 2023, https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/MMR-maternal-deaths-and-LTR_MMEIG-trends_2000-2020_released-Feb_2023.xlsx.

63 UN Women, 'Country Gender Equality Profile Vietnam 2021', https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEA/Docs/Publications/2021/10/vn-CGEP_Full.pdf, Hanoi, 2021, p. 41.

of MMR among women in rural and mountainous regions who face severe shortages in accessing quality healthcare,⁶⁴ as was also noted in the Concluding Observations issued by the CEDAW.⁶⁵ Despite targeted WHO projects,⁶⁶ and the government's aim to achieve a MMR of less than 45 – which is a higher target than that set under the SDG (which is a MMR of 70), the current MMR of 124 reflects the need to revitalize the efforts to improve the healthcare services, and to increase awareness about the preventable causes of maternal deaths, especially in remote areas.⁶⁷

Belize, which had already dropped by 18 ranks in this domain in KRI 11, drops by a further 14 ranks in KRI 12. Its MMR increased by 261%, from 36 to 130. Belize effectively dropped down from being 76th in KRI 10 (2022) to 107th in KRI 12 in 2024. The MMR in **Belize** is the highest since the year 2000 when it was at 86. It had significantly reduced to 33 in 2010 but since then has been on a negative trend. Currently it is at a historic low of 130.⁶⁸

Similarly, **Kenya**, which had dropped by 15 ranks in KRI 11 (2023), fell by another 11 ranks in this domain in KRI 12. **Tonga** – which had gained ten ranks in the Domain 'Life' in KRI 11 – fell by another 11 ranks in this domain this year. Its MMR increased from 52 to 126 or by nearly 150%. Similar to Belize, the MMR in **Tonga** is at a historic high of 126. Between 2000 to 2015 its MMR had remained stagnant around 90, only to increase further now.⁶⁹

3.2.2. Underlying indicator data: Domain Life

There have been no updates to the underlying data for the indicators 'life expectancy' and 'under 5 mortality rate'. New data is available for the indicator 'maternal mortality ratio (MMR)'. MMR is the highest in **South Sudan** at 1223 deaths per 100.000 live births and the lowest in **Belarus** at 1 death per 100.000 live births. Despite the reduction of the number of maternal deaths in South Sudan from 5.000 in 2015 to 3.800 as per the latest data, it continues to be the worst performing country on this indicator.⁷⁰ **Cyprus** recorded a massive jump in the MMR, from 6 to 68 or 10 times worse. **Finland**, **Greece**, and **Italy** also recorded a significant increase of over 150% in MMR, while in the **United Arab Emirates** it has tripled - from 3 to 9. In **Venezuela**, the MMR doubled from 125 to 259. Notably, there have been no significant reductions in the rankings of the countries in the top 100 of the Domain 'Life' in KRI 12.

64 Ibid.

65 Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Seventh and Eighth Periodic Reports of Viet Nam', UN Doc. CEDAW/C/VNM/CO/7-8, 29 July 2015, para. 32.

66 World Health Organization, 'Integrating Services for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and Noncommunicable Diseases at District-level Facilities: Viet Nam', Geneva, 2023, <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/374178/9789240079038-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

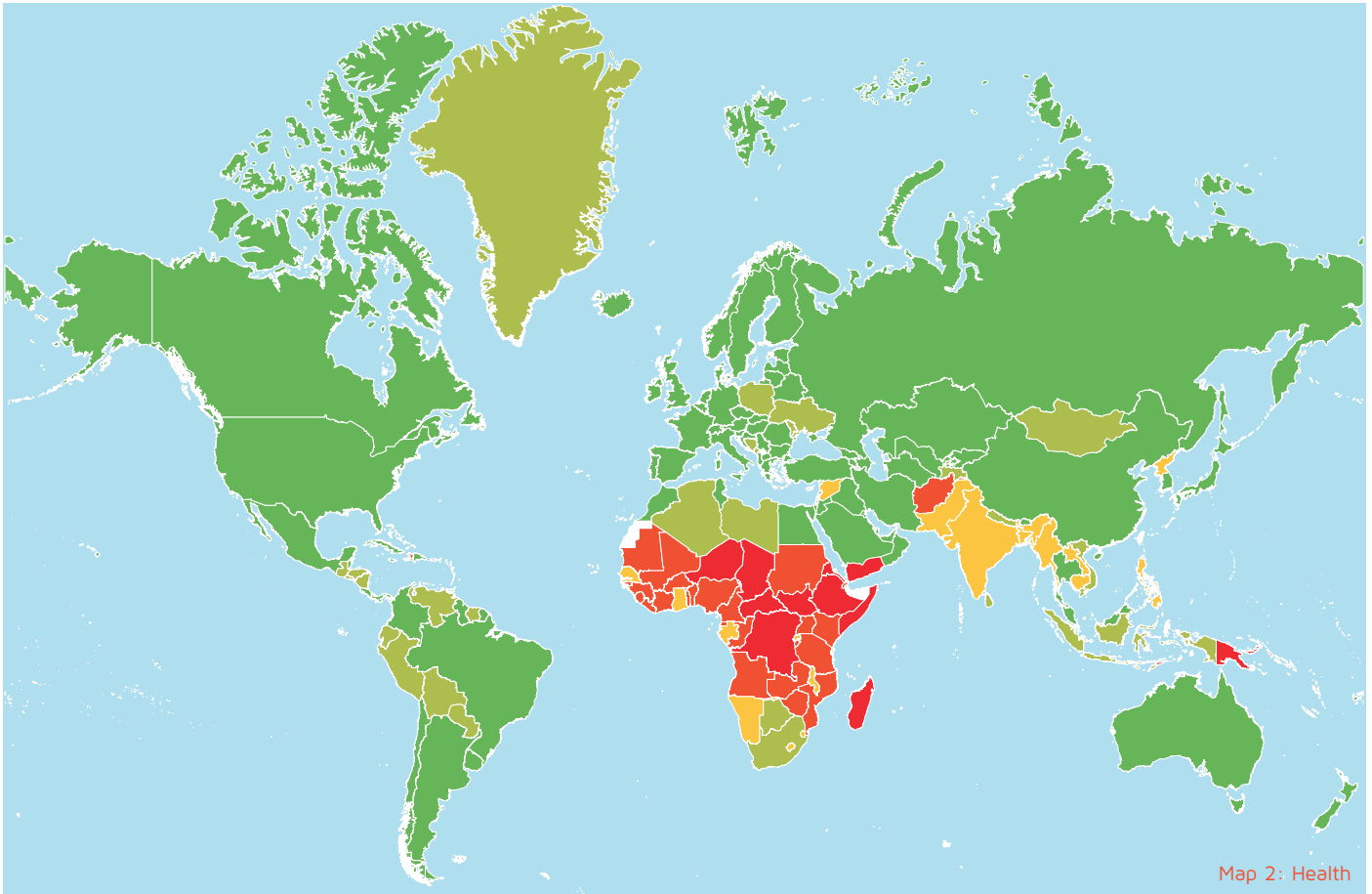
67 Ibid., p 10.

68 UNICEF, 'Trends in Estimates of Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), Maternal Deaths and Lifetime risk of Maternal Death, 2000-2020', February 2023, https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/MMR-maternal-deaths-and-LTR_MMEIG-trends_2000-2020_released-Feb_2023.xlsx.

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

3.3 Domain 2: Health



The following table lists the top ten performing countries in the Domain 'Health'.

Countries	Health Rank KRI 12	Health Score KRI 12
Bahrain	1	1,000
Israel	2	1,000
Liechtenstein	3	1,000
Qatar	4	1,000
Andorra	5	0,997
Belarus	6	0,997
Japan	7	0,997
United Arab Emirates	8	0,997
Brunei Darussalam	9	0,993
Czechia	10	0,993

Table 4: Top Ten Countries in Domain Health

Bahrain, Israel, and Liechtenstein are the best performing countries, all with a perfect score in the Domain 'Health'. **Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, and Czechia** are the new entrants in the top ten of the Domain Health, with **Belarus** improving by an impressive 32 ranks in comparison to KRI 11.

The Country Office of **Belarus** launched the e-portal “mother and child” and promoted the use of the “Bebbo” mobile app to improve information on healthcare facilities, child development and nutrition, along with providing additional resources for children with developmental disabilities through its network of healthcare facilities.⁷¹ This initiative is likely to have impacted Belarus’s performance in this domain as it promotes better practices in nutrition and healthcare access - vital components in enhancing the overall health and development of children. Additionally, the World Bank’s ‘Belarus Water Supply and Sanitation Project’ whose objective is to enhance the water supply system and wastewater treatment services might have fueled Belarus’s performance on this indicator.⁷² Between 2000 and 2020, the percentage of population in Belarus accessing safely managed drinking water improved by over ten percentage points to reach 93.1%.⁷³

3.3.1. Big movers in the Domain Health

Climbers

Antigua and Barbuda and **Mauritius** improved by around 60 ranks each in the Domain Health. **Samoa** also improved in this domain, from 119th in KRI 11 to 76th in KRI 12, or a rise of 42 ranks. **Malta** climbed 30 ranks, from 48th in KRI 11 to 18th in KRI 12.

Descenders

Cook Islands fell steeply, by 120 ranks, from being 3rd in the domain in KRI 11 to settle at the much lower 123rd position in KRI 12. **Portugal** and the **Republic of Korea** also gave up their position in the top ten ranks of the Domain Health in KRI 12 and now rank 15th and 13th respectively.

Sweden fell by 28 ranks in the Domain Health, from the 14th position in KRI 11 to the 42nd position in KRI 12. **Saudi Arabia** and **Poland** fell by around 45 ranks each in the Domain Health.

3.3.2. Underlying indicator data: Domain Health

Underweight children

Data on underweight children is available for eight more countries in KRI 12 than was the case last year. The number of underweight children in **Djibouti** and **Uzbekistan** reduced by 38% each. **Cambodia** and **Nepal** improved on this indicator by 32% and 23% respectively, and **Tanzania**, **Kuwait**, **Bangladesh** and **Bulgaria** each by around 15%.

The number of underweight children in **Portugal** more than doubled in comparison to the previously available data. According to UNICEF estimates (2023) the increase in the low birthweight among infants is likely to have caused this negative change.⁷⁴ **Belgium** also witnessed an increase in the number of underweight children by 10%. In **Mauritania** and **Burkina Faso**, the number of underweight children increased by no less than 51% and 32% respectively. UNICEF reports a rise in number of underweight children and wasting among children in Mauritania and Burkina Faso among other countries in the Sahel region, attributing the cause to an increase in food insecurity and food prices in addition to acute food

71 UNICEF, ‘Enhancing Parenting Skills and Child Nutrition Through Technology and Community Outreach’, 2023, p. 5, <https://www.unicef.org/media/152006/file/Belarus-2023-COAR.pdf>.

72 Worldbank, ‘How a Water Supply and Sanitation Project Helped Belarus Exceed Expectations’, 2020, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/water/how-water-supply-and-sanitation-project-helped-belarus-exceed-expectations>.

73 United Nations Belarus, ‘Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation’, no date, <https://belarus.un.org/en/sdgs/6/progress>.

74 UNICEF, ‘UNICEF-WHO Low Birthweight Estimates Report’, July 2023, <https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/UNICEF-WHO-LBW-estimates-2023.xlsx>.

poverty already faced by a large percentage of children.⁷⁵

Immunization

The **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** has recorded a 0% immunization of 1-year olds, dropping from its earlier 42%. It has reduced from 99% immunization to an absolute 0% between KRI 10 and KRI 12. In the **Cook Islands** and the **Syrian Arab Republic** immunization went down significantly too, by 38% and 30% respectively.

The **Cook Islands** has shown a decline in childhood immunization rates over recent years, primarily due to the small size of birth cohorts which leads to greater variation in reported coverage.⁷⁶ This fluctuation has been noted across several vaccine categories, including DTP1, DTP3, and MCV1 vaccines, indicating a general trend of decreasing immunization coverage from near-perfect rates to significantly lower percentages in recent revisions. The reasons for this decline are not explicitly detailed in the documents that could be traced, but such trends can often be influenced by logistical challenges, supply issues, changes in health policy, or public perception of vaccine safety and necessity. The decline underscores the need for continued efforts to stabilize and improve immunization coverage in the Cook Islands to ensure public health safety against preventable diseases.⁷⁷

The immunization data also shows a decrease in immunization in **Paraguay**, **Gabon**, and **Niger** by around 20% each. **Paraguay** had already recorded a decrease in immunization by 15% in KRI 11. A risk assessment by the WHO suggests that the reason for a steep fall in child immunization in Paraguay, especially DTP3 vaccine for measles,⁷⁸ is due to the COVID-19 related burden on the health system and decreased demand for vaccination due to physical distancing requirement or community reluctance.⁷⁹ In absolute terms, it has decreased from 80% immunization in KRI 10 to 54% in KRI 12. **Ukraine** has also recorded a 16% decrease in immunization. Even before the war, Ukraine had one of the lowest vaccination rates in Europe, with childhood coverage often below WHO targets.⁸⁰ By 2021, 20% of children were not fully vaccinated against measles and 13% lacked poliovirus protection, likely exacerbated by the conflict.⁸¹ Factors like vaccine hesitancy, fueled by social media misinformation, have eroded trust in Ukrainian authorities and contributed to the problem.⁸²

Montenegro has improved the most on the indicator immunization, by over 83%. It is closely followed by **Myanmar** where immunization improved by over 70%. Myanmar had recorded a 51% decrease in immunization in KRI 11 and the current positive change shows that it is moving towards normalcy post-pandemic.

South Sudan and **Vanuatu** have also recorded a substantial increase in immunization, by over 40% each. Vanuatu too is making up for a 35% decrease on this indicator in KRI 11. **Liberia**, **Samoa**, **Solomon Islands** and **Suriname** also improved by around 30% each. With consistent improvement, Suriname has gradually improved from 45% immunization in KRI 10 to 74% immunization in KRI 12.

75 UNICEF, 'Nearly One Million Children Under 5 in Central Sahel Facing Severe Wasting', 26 September 2023, https://www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/nearly-one-million-children-under-5-central-sahel-facing-severe-wasting-2023-unicef#_ftn1.

76 UNICEF, 'Cook Islands: WHO and UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage: 2022 Revision', 1 July 2023, https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/country-profiles/immunization/2023-country-profiles/immunization_cok_2023.pdf, p. 3.

77 Ibid.

78 UNICEF, 'Paraguay: WHO and UNICEF Estimates of Immunization Coverage: 2022 Revision', 1 July 2023, <https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/cp/immunisation/pry.pdf>.

79 World Health Organization, 'Disease Outbreak News: Measles – Paraguay', 2 February 2023, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2023-DON438>.

80 Matilda Hill, Samantha Vanderslott, Alla Volokha, Andrew J Pollard, 'Addressing Vaccine Inequities Among Ukrainian Refugees', *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, July 2022, pp. 935-936, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(22\)00366-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(22)00366-8/fulltext).

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

The **Philippines, Indonesia, and Iraq** have shown improvement in immunization of one-year olds, recording an increase of around 17% each.

In total, 84 of the 194 countries included in the KRI 12 have recorded the immunization of over 90% of the one-year-olds in their respective countries. This is five countries more than last year when 79 of the 193 countries recorded over 90% immunization rates.

Sanitation

The **Cook Islands** witnessed the highest reduction of all in the *percentage of the population using improved sanitation facilities*. This reduced to 85% from its earlier recorded data of 100%. UNICEF (2017) had predicted that shortages in water supply due to droughts, which are becoming more frequent on the main island of Rarotonga, could cause concerns in future and impact sanitation services.⁸³ The fall in sanitation services on the Cook Islands is likely a testament to this prediction. Other island nations recorded poorer results on this indicator too. This includes **Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu** which have all recorded a reduction of between 7% to 11% of their respective population using improved sanitation facilities.

Malawi witnessed an improvement by 85%, the largest by any country on this indicator. With this improvement, nearly 50% of the population of Malawi now has access to improved sanitation facilities. **Guinea-Bissau** and **Sierra Leone** have improved by 53% and 39% respectively in comparison to the previously recorded data. **Liberia, Ghana, and Madagascar** have also improved by over 20% on this indicator. However, even with such substantial increases, not more than 30% of the population in Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, and Madagascar have access to improved sanitation facilities in their respective countries.

Drinking water

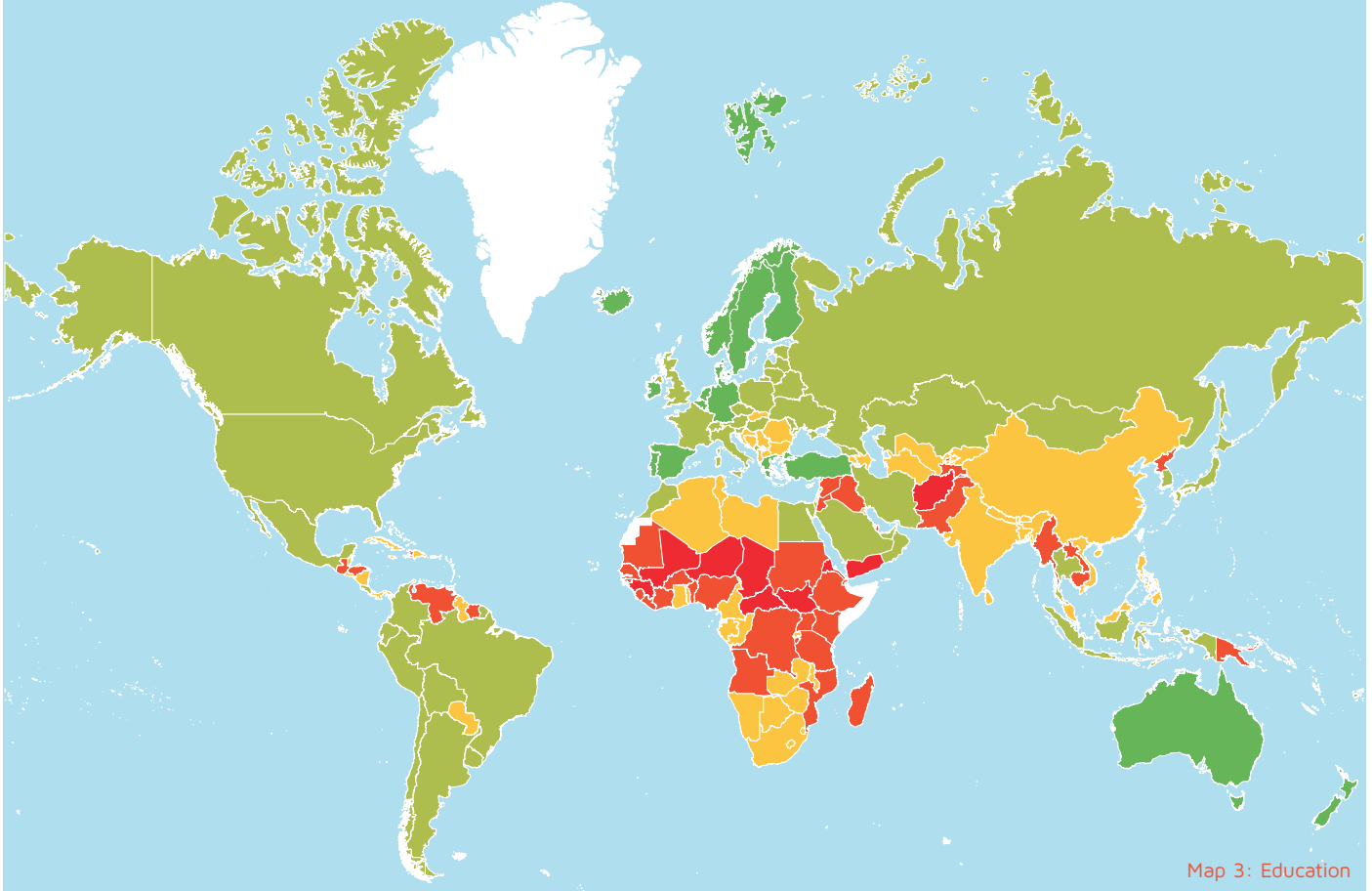
Chad improved the most of all on access to improved drinking water facilities. It improved by 13%, closely followed by **Guinea** and **Papua New Guinea** which recorded an increase by 12% and 11% respectively. **Cambodia, Afghanistan, Mauritania, and Samoa** have also recorded an improvement by around 10% from the previously recorded data. In fact, with this improvement, 100% of Samoa's population has access to improved drinking water facilities. Samoa has made improvements in relation to drinking water through several integrated approaches to address their Triple Planetary Crisis, which includes climate disruption, nature loss, and pollution.⁸⁴

The **Democratic Republic of Congo** recorded a 24% decrease on this indicator. Only 35% of its population now has access to improved drinking water facilities compared to 46% when the data was previously recorded. **Poland** is the only other country that has recorded a significant decrease on this indicator. Access to improved drinking water facilities reduced from a 100% to 90% of the population, a decrease of 10%.

83 UNICEF Pacific, 'Situation Analysis: Children in the Cook Islands', December 2017, <https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/reports/situation-analysis-children-cook-islands>.

84 Simona Marinescu, 'Water is Life: How the UN in Samoa is Responding to the Triple Planetary Crisis', 21 March 2023, <https://un-dco.org/stories/water-life-how-un-samoa-responding-triple-planetary-crisis>.

3.4 Domain 3: Education



The following table lists the top ten performing countries in the Domain Education.

Countries	Education Rank KRI 12	Education Score KRI 12
Australia	1	1,000
Belgium	2	1,000
Denmark	3	1,000
Finland	4	1,000
Greece	5	1,000
Grenada	6	1,000
Iceland	7	1,000
Ireland	8	1,000
Netherlands	9	1,000
New Zealand	10	1,000
Sweden	11	1,000

Table 5: Top Ten countries in Domain Education

The top ten in the Domain Education in the KRI 12 remains the same as the top 10 in KRI 11. There has been no change in the data available for the Domain Education since KRI 11, except for the inclusion of Liechtenstein in this domain. While the data for Liechtenstein was available during KRI 11 as well, it was not included in the Index then because the domain scores for more than 2 domains were missing. This

situation changed this year for the better. The previous lack of data on the right to education for children in **Liechtenstein** can primarily be attributed to the limited public access to comprehensive educational data in the country. Liechtenstein does not regularly publish detailed statistics on education in accessible global databases like those maintained by UNESCO or the World Bank. This scarcity of information can make it challenging to assess and compare the state of education rights comprehensively in Liechtenstein on an international scale. With the inclusion of Liechtenstein in KRI 12, which finds itself at 88th position out of the 187 countries which have scores available for the Domain Education, all the countries ranked after Liechtenstein have shifted down a rank since KRI 11.

The Domain Education still does not have scores for seven countries that are included in the KRI 12. These are still the same as in KRI 11: Andorra, Bahamas, Cook Islands, Equatorial Guinea, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, and Somalia.

Australia emphasizes the education of both genders without discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities in educational access and retention. This commitment extends to addressing specific barriers that might affect girls' education, such as gender-based violence and socio-economic challenges.⁸⁵ Australia has seen consistent improvements in preschool education, especially in enrollments for four- and five-year-olds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.⁸⁶ It maintains high retention rates from Year 7/8 to Year 12, ensuring that students are staying in school longer, which contributes to better educational outcomes.⁸⁷

The Nordic countries **Iceland, Norway, Finland** and **Sweden** consistently rank high in terms of gender equality in education. These countries have comprehensive educational systems that support equal access for all genders from early childhood through to higher education. Iceland, for example, has been highlighted for its efforts towards closing the gender gap in both education and employment, aiming towards achieving complete gender parity.⁸⁸

The **Netherlands** has achieved significant gender parity in educational opportunities, which is reflected in the consistent high enrollment rates among both genders.⁸⁹ In fact, for over two decades now, more women than men have been enrolled in higher education in the Netherlands. This underscores a significant achievement in gender equality in terms of access to education.⁹⁰

Afghanistan is a particularly severe case, being the only country in the world that prohibits women and girls from receiving education beyond the primary level. The discriminatory policies of Afghanistan's *de facto* authorities bar women's and girls' access to secondary schools, universities, and other centers of learning, which has drawn international condemnation.⁹¹

85 Plan International Australia, 'Girl's Education: What are the Barriers to Girl's Education?', no date, <https://www.plan.org.au/our-work/girls-education/>.

86 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Preschool Education, 2023', 22 March 2023, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/preschool-education/2023>.

87 Ibid.

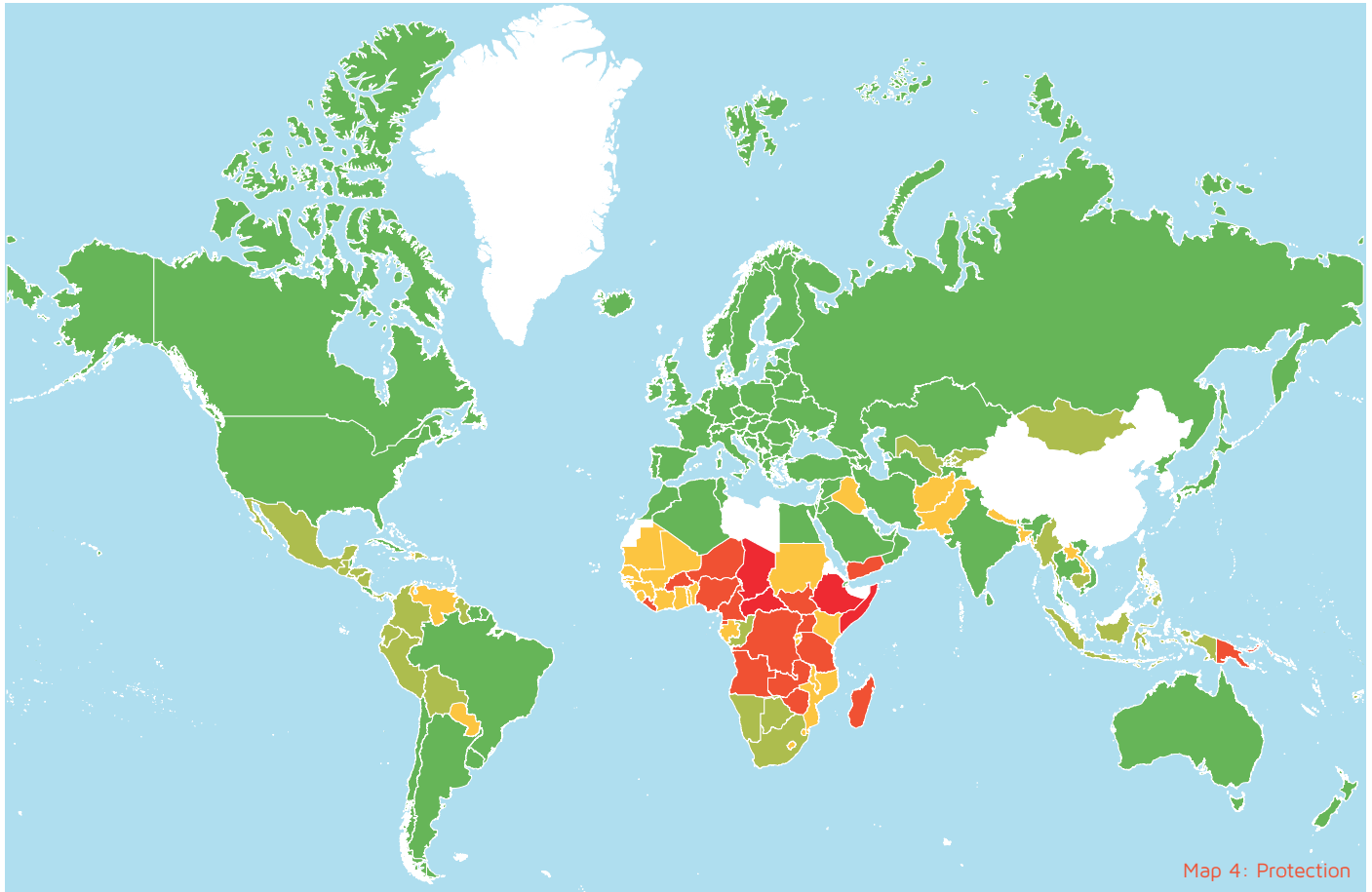
88 Kusum Kali Pal, 'Gender Equality by 2030? Those Countries Making Most Progress Offer Lessons on What to Change', *World Economic Forum*, 21 September 2022, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/09/gender-gap-lessons-on-what-to-change/>.

89 UN Women, 'Women Count: Country Fact Sheet - Netherlands', no date, <https://data.unwomen.org/country/netherlands>.

90 Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS), 'More Women than Men in Higher Education for 23 Consecutive Years', 8 March 2023, <https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2023/10/more-women-than-men-in-higher-education-for-23-consecutive-years>.

91 Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (OHCHR), 'The World is Failing 130 Million Girls Denied Education: UN Experts', 23 January 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/01/world-failing-130-million-girls-denied-education-un-experts>.

3.5 Domain 4: Protection



The following table lists the top ten performing countries in the Domain Protection.

Countries	Protection Rank KRI 12	Protection Score KRI 12
Switzerland	1	0,997
Denmark	2	0,996
Netherlands	3	0,996
Norway	4	0,996
Singapore	5	0,996
Japan	6	0,994
Slovenia	7	0,994
Luxembourg	8	0,993
Sweden	9	0,993
Finland	10	0,992

Table 6: Top Ten countries in Domain Protection

There has been no change in the ranking of the top ten countries in the Domain Protection. **Switzerland** continues to be the top performer in this domain.

3.5.1. Big movers in the Domain Protection

Climbers

Malawi has improved the most in this domain by climbing 20 ranks, from 162nd in KRI 11 to 142nd in KRI 12. It is closely followed by **India** which moved up by 18 ranks from 83rd in KRI 11 to 65th in KRI 12. **El Salvador** improved by 9 ranks in this domain, while **Nigeria** and **Indonesia** improved by 6 ranks each.

Descenders

Uzbekistan fell the most in the Domain Protection, from 51st in KRI 11 to 102nd in KRI 12. The main explanation for this is that data is now available for child labour. While child labour in cotton fields was a common occurrence in Uzbekistan in the past, in 2022 the ILO's Third-Party Monitoring Report declared the cotton industry to be free from systemic child labour.⁹² However, child labour continues to persist in the informal sector due to lack of support for low-income families.⁹³ **Guyana**, **Mauritania**, and **Rwanda** also fell by around 15 ranks each in this domain in the KRI 12.

3.5.2. Underlying indicator data: Domain Protection

Child Labour

Child labour in **Guyana** increased by around 70% from its previously recorded data. Guyana adopted the National Policy on Child Labour in 2019 (2019-2025). However, concerns remain regarding inadequate investments in addressing socio-economic and cultural aspects that are the root causes of child labour.⁹⁴ Major concerns relate to the lack of adequate protection of children against commercial sexual exploitation, and limited access to essential education services and facilities for children in rural and remote areas, which in turn contributes to their higher engagement in child labour.⁹⁵

In **Mexico**, child labour decreased by over 20% and thus it went back to the same level as it was in KRI 10. This contributed to a minor improvement of 2 ranks in the Domain Protection. In the past few years, **Mexico** has actively undertaken multiple policy and legislative changes, and has implemented various programs to combat child labour. Its efforts include: the ratification⁹⁶ of ILO's 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention – only the 60th country to ratify at that time;⁹⁷ implementation of the 'Wellbeing National Scholarship Program', a cash transfer program to provide inclusive and equitable education to children in poor or vulnerable situations;⁹⁸ the 'Assistance for At Risk Children and Adolescents Program' – to provide mental support and training to youth at risk of being engaged in child labour;⁹⁹ the enhanced decentralization of responsibilities at the municipal level to address child labour;¹⁰⁰ a 'National Program

92 International Labour Organisation (ILO), 'Uzbek Cotton is Free from Systemic Child Labour and Forced Labour', 1 March 2022, https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_838396/lang--en/index.htm.

93 Eurasianet, 'Uzbekistan: Widespread Child Labor Persists Away from the Fields', 30 January 2023, <https://eurasianet.org/uzbekistan-widespread-child-labor-persists-away-from-the-fields>.

94 Human Rights Council, 'Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Compilation on Guyana', UN Doc. A/HRC/DEC/45/112, 9 October 2020, para 69, <https://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?OpenAgent&DS=A/HRC/DEC/45/112&Lang=E>.

95 Bureau of International Labor Affairs, '2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour: Guyana', 2022, p. 2, https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/child_labor_reports/tda2022/Guyana.pdf.

96 International Labour Organisation, 'Mexico Renews Commitment Against Forced Labour', 13 June 2023, https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/forced-labor/WCMS_885140/lang--en/index.htm.

97 Bureau of International Labor Affairs, '2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour: Mexico', 2022, https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/child_labor_reports/tda2022/Mexico.pdf.

98 UN ECLAC (Social Development Division), 'Benito Juárez Scholarships for the Well-being (2019-)', <https://dds.cepal.org/bpsnc/programme?id=175>.

99 Bureau of International Labor Affairs, '2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour: Mexico', 2022, p. 6, https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/child_labor_reports/tda2022/Mexico.pdf.

100 *Ibid.*, p.1.

for the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (2020–2024)’ prioritizing action on child labour;¹⁰¹ and the ‘National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons (2022–2024)’.¹⁰² The US Department of Labour has recently provided a support of around 12 million USD to reduce child and forced labour in Mexico.¹⁰³ With the concerted efforts of the government, civil-society organisations, and other countries, child labour in Mexico may see a further reduction in the coming years.

Adolescent Birth

There have been no updates of the underlying data for the indicator ‘Adolescent Birth’ since KRI 11.

Birth Registration

Malawi improved birth registration by a massive 1096%, going up from 5.6 to 66.9. Birth registrations are essential to bestow full legal rights on children and to record their legal existence. Article 7 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides the right to birth registration with name and nationality.¹⁰⁴ The National Registration Act 2010 of **Malawi** mandated birth registrations for the first time,¹⁰⁵ and since then the birth registration rate has continued to improve as a result of the efforts made by the Malawian government, UNICEF, and other civil society organisations.

Nigeria also recorded a significant increase in its birth registrations, from a mere 30% in 2013 to 43% in 2019¹⁰⁶ and 57% as per the latest available data.¹⁰⁷ The collaboration between the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), UNICEF and the National Population Commission (NPC) is a driving force behind the digitalization of birth registration.¹⁰⁸ Nigeria’s adoption and implementation of the e-CRVS system (Electronic Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System) in 2023 is expected to contribute to a further increase in birth registrations in the coming years.¹⁰⁹

Somalia recorded 50% less birth registrations, to a meagre 3% from 5.9 % before. In its Concluding Observations on the initial report of Somalia in 2022, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child had expressed serious concerns over the extremely low birth registrations in **Somalia** and over the lack of a “legal or policy framework or structure to register a child at birth”.¹¹⁰ Somalia remains as the country with the second lowest birth registrations among all the countries in KRI 12, with only Ethiopia performing worse. Children in vulnerable situations are among the ones with the lowest birth registrations in Somalia. These include children in refugee camps, ethnic minorities, and children living in remote areas¹¹¹. Lack of birth registrations in Somalia leaves most children in Somalia without a way to prove their age. This leads to various child rights issues for them. For instance, when they are charged with a criminal offence too many children in Somalia are tried under the adult criminal justice system instead of the

101 *Ibid.*, p.6.

102 *Ibid.*

103 US Department of Labour, ‘US Department of Labor Awards More Than \$12m to Combat Child Labor, Forced Labor in Mexico, Promote Migrant Worker Rights’, 9 January 2024, <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/ilab/ilab20240109>.

104 Article 7, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

105 James Chavula, ‘Training and Mentorship of Health Workers Improves Birth Registration Process’, UNICEF, 8 August 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/malawi/stories/training-and-mentorship-health-workers-improves-birth-registration-process>.

106 UNICEF, ‘Despite Significant Increase in Birth Registration, 17 Million of Nigeria’s Children Remain ‘Invisible’, 11 December 2019, <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/press-releases/despite-significant-increase-birth-registration-17-million-nigerias-children-remain>.

107 UNICEF, ‘Nigeria - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) & National Immunization Coverage Survey (NICS)’, August 2022, p. 321. <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/media/6316/file/2021%20MICS%20full%20report%20.pdf>.

108 UNICEF, ‘NYSC, NPC, and UNICEF Join Forces to Revolutionize Birth Registration in Nigeria’, 7 June 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/press-releases/nysc-npc-and-unicef-join-forces-revolutionize-birth-registration-nigeria>.

109 UNICEF, ‘Nigeria Sets New Standard in Civil Registration with Launch of Innovative e-CRVS System’, 8 November 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/press-releases/nigeria-sets-new-standard-civil-registration-launch-innovative-e-crvs-system>.

110 Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Initial Report of Somalia’, UN Doc. CRC/C/SOM/CO/1, 22 June 2022, para 32.

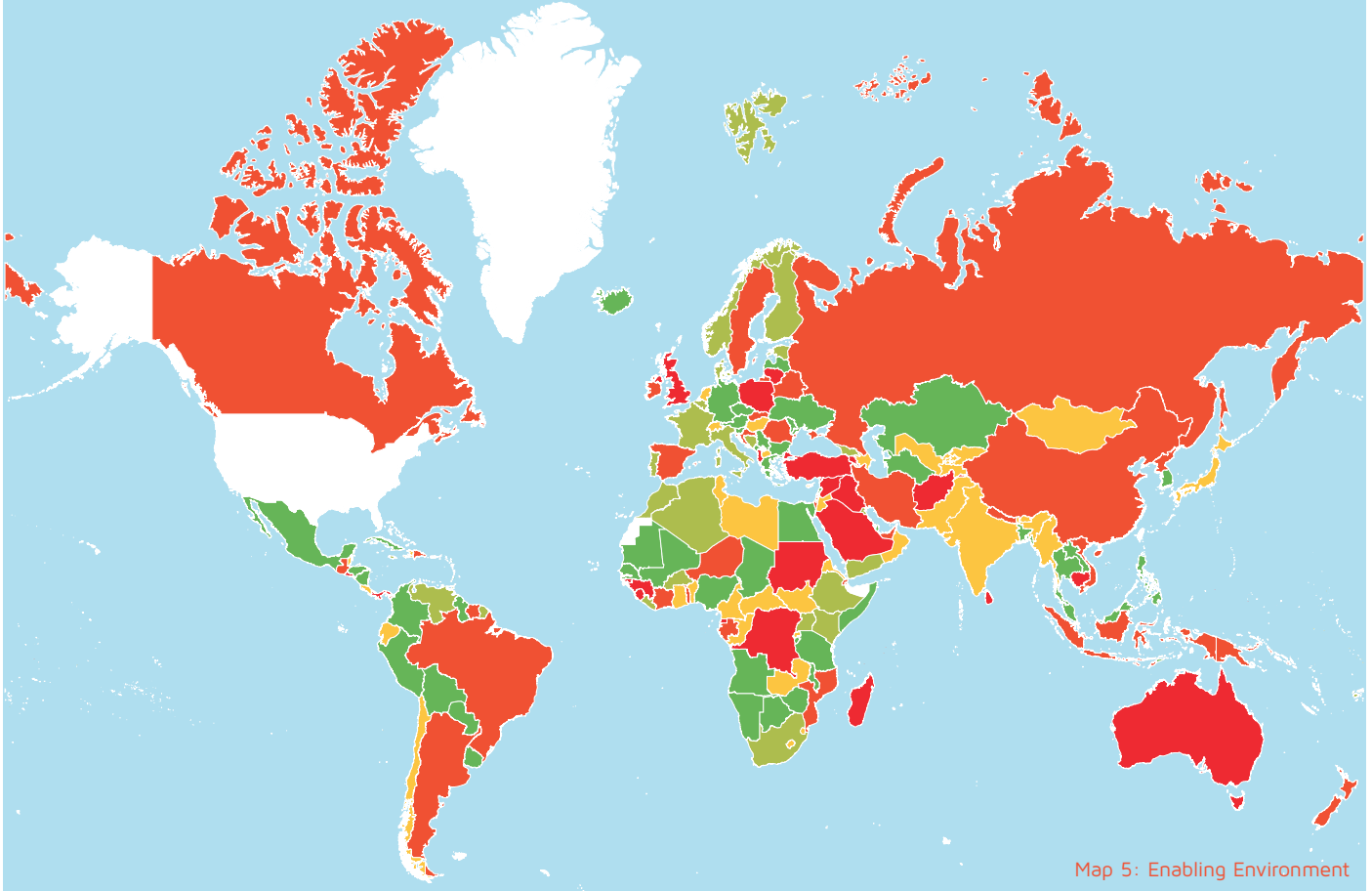
111 Chris Cuninghame, Salah Kheir, Monica Martinez and Chris Rayment, ‘Child Notice Somalia’, 2018, p. 27, para. 43, <https://www.unicef.nl/files/UNICEF%20Rapport%20Child%20Notice%20Somalia%202018%20-%20final.pdf>.

juvenile justice system¹¹².

Mauritania and **Rwanda** recorded 35% less birth registrations as compared to previously available data for their respective countries. No particular reason could be identified for the decline in birth registrations in these countries. **Ecuador** and **Guyana** also recorded a fall in birth registration by around 10% each. No data is available for **Sri Lanka** for this indicator.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

3.6 Domain 5: Enabling Environment



The following table lists the top ten performing countries in the Domain Enabling Environment.

Countries	Enabling Environment Rank KRI 12	Enabling Environment Score KRI 12
Thailand	1	0,750
Luxembourg	2	0,714
Mauritania	3	0,714
Namibia	4	0,700
Qatar	5	0,700
Antigua and Barbuda	6	0,667
Barbados	7	0,667
Guyana	8	0,667
Liechtenstein	9	0,667
Malawi	10	0,667

Table 7: Top Ten countries in Domain Enabling Environment

A total of 19 countries received their Concluding Observations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2023. This is a similar number as in the year 2022 when 22 countries received their Concluding Observations.

Thailand continues to be at the top of the rankings in the Domain Enabling Environment. **Namibia** moved up 24 ranks to feature in the top ten of this domain and **Liechtenstein** - the only new entrant in KRI 12 - also finds a place in the top ten.

While **Thailand** continues to remain as the best performing country in the Domain Enabling Environment, its score reduced from 0.833 in KRI 11 to 0.750 in KRI 12. The average score of the top ten countries in this domain reduced from 0.770 in KRI 11 to 0.691 in KRI 12. The average score of all the countries in this domain has also reduced from 0.479 in KRI 11 to 0.415 in KRI 12.

3.6.1. Big movers in the Domain Enabling Environment

Climbers

Of the countries who received new Concluding Observations in 2023, **New Zealand** improved by 31 ranks in the Domain Enabling Environment. It climbed up from the 190th position in KRI 11 to 159th in KRI 12. **Andorra** improved by 29 ranks in this domain, from 61st in KRI 11 to 32nd in KRI 12. Similarly, **Kyrgyzstan** improved by 24 ranks.

Descenders

Of the countries who received new Concluding Observations in 2023, **Sweden** dropped by 122 ranks in the Domain Enabling Environment, from being 45th in KRI 11 to a relatively very low 167th in KRI 12. **Oman** dropped the second most in this domain, by 102 ranks from 25th in KRI 11 to 127th in KRI 12. It is closely followed by **Albania** which dropped by 101 ranks in this domain. **Türkiye**, **Mauritius**, and **Sao Tome and Principe** dropped by 99 ranks, 92 ranks and 80 ranks respectively.

3.6.2. Striking results in Domain 5

Based on its 2023 Concluding Observations, **Albania** dropped by 95 ranks from being 59th in KRI 11 to 154th in KRI 12. In Domain 5, Albania dropped from 83rd in KRI 11 to a low 184th in KRI 12. Considering that it hasn't recorded any substantial change in Domains 1 to 4, its decline in overall rankings in KRI 12 can be directly attributed to this significant fall in Domain 5. **Albania** maintained the same indicator score for the 'best interests of the child' and 'enabling legislation' but scored lower on all other indicators ('non-discrimination', 'respect for the views of the child', 'best available budget', 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data' and 'state-civil society cooperation'). The scores involved went down from a score of 2 to the lowest possible score of 1.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its 2013 Concluding Observations on children's rights in **Albania**, has raised serious concerns about the persisting discriminatory practices against children from vulnerable backgrounds,¹¹³ government's inability to combat traditional practices that perpetuate discrimination,¹¹⁴ and its failure to address the concerns raised by the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination.¹¹⁵ The Committee also reiterated its General Comment 12 (2009) and recommended Albania to enact legislation to enable the effective participation of children in matters concerning them, and to train the relevant professionals to effectively implement in practice the right of children to be heard.¹¹⁶ Lack of public data on budget allocated for children was another primary concern of the Committee.¹¹⁷

113 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Albania', UN Doc. CRC/C/ALB/CO/5-6, 17 October 2023, para. 16.

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid., para. 9.

In 2024, **Andorra** improved its overall ranking by 7 ranks, from 31st in KRI 11 to 24th in KRI 12. It witnessed an upward movement in Domain 5 by 29 ranks. While it ranked 61st in KRI 11, currently it is in the 32nd position in Domain 5. It did not record any significant change in the life and protection domains, while the domain scores for the education and protection domains are still not available. Therefore, its overall improvement by 7 ranks is directly attributable to its improved performance in Domain 5.

Andorra maintained the same score as before for five indicators in Domain 5. It scored lower on the indicator 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data'. It received the highest possible score of 3 for the indicator 'respect for the views of the child'. Andorra did not receive a score for this indicator in its previous reporting cycle. The Committee on the Rights of the Child appreciated the efforts of Andorra in promoting child participation, especially through the 'child-friendly parishes' project – a regional initiative spread across all seven parishes focusing on child participation and child friendly budget,¹¹⁸ and the 'National Plan for Children and Adolescents' which heavily focused on child participation as well.¹¹⁹

Azerbaijan ranks 77th in KRI 12. This is a decline by 13 ranks in comparison to KRI 11 where it ranked 64th. It dropped by 16 ranks in Domain 5, from 70th in 2023 to 86th in 2024. and the country did not see any significant movements in Domains 1 to 4. Thus, this change is fully attributable to Domain 5.

Azerbaijan received the same scores as previously for four indicators and a lower score for the indicators 'best interests of the child' and 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data'. It received a higher score on the indicator 'non-discrimination'. While the Committee on the Rights of the Child appreciated its efforts in combating discrimination, it reiterated the need for Azerbaijan to expeditiously integrate the 'best interests of the child' principle in legislation and practice,¹²⁰ and has also recommended it to "improve its sectoral management information systems and further strengthen the children's databank".¹²¹

Bolivia's position in the KidsRights Index improved by 6 ranks – from being 71st in KRI 11 to 65th in KRI 12. It did not undergo any significant changes in its ranks in any of the domains. Therefore, its improvement in the ranking may be due to relatively poorer performance of other countries in KRI 12. **Bolivia** maintained the same score as in the previous reporting cycle for all the seven indicators of Domain 5. It is commendable that Bolivia retained a indicator score of 2 for all seven indicators of Domain 5, as the usual trend is for states to receive a downgrade for non-compliance with previous recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child which tends to adopt an ever stricter view during subsequent reporting cycles.

The **Dominican Republic** dropped down to the 118th position in KRI 12, from 104th in KRI 11. It fell by 39 ranks in Domain 5 – from 118th in KRI 11 to 157th in KRI 12. It did not undergo any significant changes in its rankings in Domains 1 to 4. The **Dominican Republic** witnesses a decline on three indicator scores of Domain 5: 'best interests of the child', 'enabling legislation' and 'state-civil society cooperation'. For the remaining four indicators the scores remained the same. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended the Dominican Republic to "finalize the draft judicial policy on children",¹²² integrate the best interests of the child in all judicial, administrative and legislative proceedings and decisions, and to provide appropriate training for professionals to use the best interests principle in practice.¹²³

118 UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative, 'Parròquies Amigues de la Infància: Andorra', no date, <https://www.childfriendlycities.org/initiatives/andorra>.

119 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Third to Fifth Periodic Reports of Andorra', UN Doc. CRC/C/AND/CO/3-5, 17 October 2023, para. 19.

120 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Azerbaijan', UN Doc. CRC/C/AZE/CO/5-6, 09 February 2023, para. 18.

121 Ibid., para. 10.

122 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of the Dominican Republic', UN Doc. CRC/C/DOM/CO/6, 18 October 2023, para. 17.

123 Ibid.

Finland takes up the 7th position in KRI 12 which is a drop down from the 2nd rank in KRI 11. It declined by 34 ranks in Domain 5, from 33rd in KRI 11 to 67th in KRI 12. Since it did not undergo any rank changes in Domains 1 to 4, its decline in overall rankings in KRI 12 can be attributed to its poorer performance in Domain 5. For four indicators of Domain 5 **Finland** received the same score as in its previous reporting cycle including for 'state civil society cooperation' for which still no score could be attributed. It witnessed a decline in the indicator scores for 'respect for the views of the child' and 'best available budget'. On the indicator 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data' it received a higher score. The Committee on the Rights of the Child noted Finland's failure to systematically consider the views of children in decisions pertaining to them, and the limitation of its Child Welfare Act which provides the opportunity to be heard only for children over 12 years.¹²⁴ It also recommended Finland to adopt a child-rights based approach to budgeting, delineate specific budgets of various categories of disadvantaged and vulnerable children, and to ensure transparent and participatory budgeting both at the national and local levels.¹²⁵ Finland was appreciated for its efforts to develop indicators to assess the trends in the realisation of children's rights.¹²⁶ In 2020, the Ministry of Justice published a report on children's participation rights in Finland where it assessed ten indicators, including "Child friendly individual complaints procedures", and "Children are provided with information about their right to participate in decision-making".¹²⁷

France dropped from being 12th in KRI 11 to 17th in KRI 12. In Domain 5, France fell from the 34th position to the 68th. Its fall in overall ranking in KRI 12 is due to its poorer performance in Domain 5 since it did not witness any change in Domains 1 to 4. **France** maintained the same score for five indicators, received a lower score on 'non-discrimination' and a higher score on 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data'. The Committee on the Rights of the Child issued stern recommendations to France to promote and ensure a culture of "equality, tolerance and mutual respect", especially to combat discrimination against children in marginalized and disadvantaged situations.¹²⁸ No score could be attributed for the indicator 'state-civil society cooperation' since the Committee on the Rights of the Child did not yet address it specifically in the Concluding Observations. The Committee did acknowledge the existing mechanism of collecting and assessing data for public policies relating to children.¹²⁹

Ireland dropped by 17 ranks, from 54th to 71st. It only dropped by seven ranks in Domain 5 and by 13 ranks in the health domain. **Ireland** received the same score for four indicators in Domain 5, including for 'state-civil society cooperation' for which no score could be generated due to the lack of explicit information on this in the Concluding Observations. Similar to France, Ireland witnessed a decline of the indicator scores for 'respect for the views of the child' and 'best available budget'. It received a higher score than was the case in the previous reporting cycle on 'non-discrimination'. The Committee on the Rights of the Child appreciated Ireland for establishing an Anti-racism Committee while being concerned about persistent discrimination against children from minority and disadvantaged groups.¹³⁰ It recommended Ireland to follow up on its commitment to hold a referendum on lowering the voting age to 16, and to provide training to professionals to become better able to implement the "Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022 and the child and youth participation strategy".¹³¹

124 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Finland', UN Doc. CRC/C/FIN/CO/5-6, 15 November 2023, para. 19.

125 *Ibid.*, para. 9.

126 *Ibid.*, para. 10.

127 Ministry of Justice Finland, 'Children's Participation Rights in Finland', 29 January 2020, https://oikeusministerio.fi/documents/1410853/4750802/OM-lasten-osallistumisoikeudet-esite-A4-EN_FINAL.pdf/45c37c85-1da6-27b0-5cbf-ddda51f0ae3.

128 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports of France', UN Doc. CRC/C/FRA/CO/6-7, 4 December 2023, para. 16.

129 *Ibid.*, para. 11.

130 *Ibid.*, para. 14.

131 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Ireland', UN Doc. CRC/C/IRL/CO/5-6, 28 February 2023, para. 18.

Jordan also dropped by 11 ranks in KRI 12. It now has the 98th position overall, in comparison to 87th in KRI 11. Jordan fell by 24 ranks in Domain 5, from 101st in KRI 11 to 124th in KRI 12. Since it did not undergo any major changes in Domains 1 to 4, this fall in the overall rankings can be attributed solely to its performance in Domain 5. **Jordan** received a higher score on three indicators: 'non-discrimination', 'best available budget' and 'state-civil society cooperation for child rights. Notably, it received the highest possible indicator score on 'best available budget'. The Committee on the Rights of the Child appreciated the consistent increase in budget for children since 2020 and recommended Jordan to continue the positive trend.¹³² However, the country witnessed a decline in indicator scores for 'best interests of the child' and 'respect for the views of the child'. The Committee reiterated its previous recommendations to Jordan to integrate the best interests of the child principle in all spheres affecting children, and to train professionals to effectively utilize it in practice.¹³³

Kyrgyzstan improved in the overall rankings by 9 ranks, going up to the 89th position in the KRI 12. It witnessed an upward movement in Domain 5 rankings as well, climbing from being 121st in KRI 11 to 97th in KRI 12. No movement was recorded in Domains 1 to 4 for Kyrgyzstan and therefore the positive change can be fully attributed to the improved performance on Domain 5. **Kyrgyzstan** maintained the same score for four indicators of Domain 5 and received a lower score for the indicator 'non-discrimination'. It received a higher score for the indicators 'respect for the views of the child' and 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data'. The Committee on the Rights of the Child explicitly appreciated the efforts to collect data on the sustainable development goals but expressed concerns over the lack of uniformity in the data collection processes by various agencies.¹³⁴ The Committee also appreciated Kyrgyzstan for its 'Decree on Participatory Local Governance' which it sees as a positive contribution to the participation rights of children.¹³⁵

In the 2024 Kids Rights Index, **Liechtenstein** achieved a commendable 9th position in Domain 5, signifying positive strides in fostering an environment conducive to children's rights. Although facing a slight setback in the non-discrimination category, with a score of 2, improvements were observed in other indicators. It demonstrated positive advancements in upholding the 'best interests of the child', 'respect for the views of the child', and 'enabling legislation'. Moreover, notable progress was made in resource allocation and on the indicator 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data', both scoring a 2. While the score on 'state-civil society cooperation for child rights' remained unchanged, Liechtenstein's overall performance underlines its commitment to enhancing children's rights within its borders. The Committee on the Rights of the Child noted that the best interests principle is legally defined in Liechtenstein,¹³⁶ and appreciated numerous steps undertaken to actively promote child participation, including the opportunity to provide comments on draft laws concerning them, and the creation of child and youth advisory councils.¹³⁷ The Committee also acknowledged the data on school enrolment rates, but recommended Liechtenstein to ensure that the data collection and analysis pertains to all areas covered by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹³⁸

Mauritius witnessed a notable shift in its standing in the Domain 5, where its score decreased significantly from 0.643 to 0.286. This resulted in a substantial decline in rank, by 92 places, now

132 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of Jordan, UN Doc. CRC/C/JOR/CO/6, 8 November 2023, para. 10.

133 Ibid., para. 19.

134 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Kyrgyzstan', UN Doc. CRC/C/KGZ/CO/5-6, 18 October 2023, para. 11.

135 Ibid., para. 19.

136 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Third and Fourth Periodic Reports of Liechtenstein', UN Doc. CRC/C/LIE/CO/3-4, 17 October 2023, para. 17.

137 Ibid., para. 18.

138 Ibid., para. 11.

at the 147th position. This contrasts starkly with its relatively strong placement at 55th last year. The factors contributing to this decline in Domain 5 performance include a decrease in the score received for the indicator 'best available budget', evidenced by a score of 1 in this category. Additionally, both the 'best interests of the child' and 'respect for the views of the child' indicators also experienced negative changes, each receiving a score of 1 only. Despite the non-discrimination and enabling legislation aspects maintaining their previous scores of 2, suggesting no significant changes in those realms, the overall shift highlights a concerning regression in the enabling environment for children's rights in Mauritius. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended Mauritius to incorporate the best interests of the child principle into its Children's Act 2020,¹³⁹ and reiterated its previous recommendations to ensure children are provided the opportunity to be heard in all matters concerning them.¹⁴⁰ It also recommended Mauritius to ensure that all child related policies and laws are accessible in child-friendly language.¹⁴¹

New Zealand significantly improved in Domain 5 of KRI 12. It now ranks at 159th, an improvement by 31 ranks, compared to its previous placement of 190th. This notable improvement is underscored by the country's Domain 5 score which has risen to 0.250. This improvement in Domain 5 has contributed to its significant overall rank change from 178th in KRI 11 to 62nd in KRI 12. Examining the changes from 2016 to 2023, while scores on Domain 5 indicators such as 'non-discrimination', 'best interests of the child', and 'respect for the views of the child' remained unchanged with a score of 1, there have been positive shifts in 'enabling legislation', 'resources', and 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data', all receiving a score of 2. This indicates a proactive effort in bolstering the legal framework, resource allocation, and data-driven policy approaches to enhance children's rights in New Zealand. While the indicator 'state-civil society cooperation for child rights' was not assessed, the overall trend highlights a commendable improvement in the conditions and support systems for children within the country. The Committee on the Rights of the Child appreciated the steps taken by New Zealand to require persons exercising power under the Oranga Tamriki Act and the Children's Act to adhere to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹⁴² It also commended the 2023 budget policy statement which prioritized child well-being indicators,¹⁴³ and the legislative obligation to collect data on outcomes for children.¹⁴⁴

In the KRI 2024, **Oman's** Domain 5 rank significantly declined to the 127th position from 25th last year. The enabling environment score also dropped to 0.357 from 0.714. Specifically, there were negative changes in the areas of 'non-discrimination' and the 'best interests of the child', both scoring 1. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended Oman to take adequate measures to combat *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination against children from marginalized and vulnerable groups, including "girls, children born to unmarried parents, children with disabilities, children of migrant workers".¹⁴⁵ There were no changes in the indicator scores for the remaining five indicators in Domain 5: 'respect for the views of the child', 'enabling legislation', 'resources', 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data', and 'state-civil society cooperation for child rights', all maintaining a score of 2.

Sao Tome & Principe ranks 169th in the 2024 KidsRights Index. It is one of the worst performing countries in Domain 5 as it ranks 190th. The country has experienced a significant decline in its 'Enabling Environment for Children's Rights' rank, dropping by 80 places with a score of only 0.071, compared to

139 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports of Mauritius', UN Doc. CRC/C/MUS/CO/6-7, 23 February 2023, para. 17.

140 Ibid., para. 18(a).

141 Ibid., para. 18(b).

142 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of New Zealand', UN Doc. CRC/C/NZL/CO/6, 28 February 2023, para. 7.

143 Ibid., para. 10.

144 Ibid., para. 11.

145 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Oman', UN Doc. CRC/C/OMN/CO/5-6, 6 March 2023, para. 17.

a score of 0.5 in KRI 11. While certain Domain 5 indicators such as 'non-discrimination' and 'state-civil society cooperation' have remained stable, most other indicators have shown negative changes.

Sweden ranks 78th in the KRI 12, while it was 1st in the KRI 11. Sweden experienced a significant decline in its results for Domain 5, plummeting by 122 ranks to 167 with a score of 0.214. This dramatic shift in ranking highlights critical areas of concern and areas of stability on indicators such as 'non-discrimination', 'budget allocation', and 'data collection', which have remained unchanged. In contrast, 'state-civil society cooperation' has shown positive change, indicating a nuanced landscape of child rights implementation in Sweden. The array of indicators and Sweden's varied performance on them underscore the complex challenges and opportunities within Sweden's framework for protecting and promoting children's rights.

In the 2024 Kids Rights Index, **Togo** achieved an overall rank of 167, marking a slight decrease from its previous rank of 159 in KRI 11. Within Domain 5, Togo attained the 152nd position, a downfall by 27 ranks compared to 2023. The results on the indicator 'non-discrimination' remained stagnant, signalling persistent challenges for marginalized groups such as girls, children with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ children, and others.¹⁴⁶ To address this, Togo would do well to develop a comprehensive anti-discrimination strategy with clear targets and to involve stakeholders like children's and women's organizations, traditional leaders, and the media.¹⁴⁷ While Togo's performance on the indicator 'respect for the views of the child' remained unchanged, according to the Committee on the Rights of the Child the establishment of children's advisory councils is commendable. However, it noted negative changes in relation to ensuring the best interests of the child and highlighted the need to review relevant laws and build capacity for consistent interpretation and application.¹⁴⁸ Positive changes were observed on the indicator budget allocation, but the Committee would like to see more resources directed towards social sectors, including child protection, and transparent budgeting processes.¹⁴⁹ While there is improvement in collecting disaggregated data, Togo should ensure comprehensive coverage and regular updates, especially regarding vulnerable children. Lastly, cooperation between the state and civil society witnessed a negative trend due to restrictive legislation. Recognizing and protecting child human rights defenders and fostering trust and collaboration with civil society through inclusive planning and monitoring mechanisms are necessary.¹⁵⁰

Türkiye ranks 113th out of 194 in the overall KidsRights Index 2024. Compared to 2023, it experienced a significant drop (of 92 places) in the overall ranking. Within Domain 5, Türkiye dropped down from 80th in KRI 11, to 179th in KRI 12. The notable decline of 99 ranks compared to the previous year suggests room for improvement in creating a supportive environment for children's rights within the country. Discrimination remains a persistent issue and particularly affects vulnerable groups such as children with disabilities, asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children, children of ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTI children, and children of parents accused of links to terrorist organizations.¹⁵¹ Urgent and systematic efforts are needed to combat discriminatory attitudes and norms. The performance record on the principle of the best interests of the child has experienced a negative change. According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, it is necessary to integrate children's rights into legislative, administrative, and judicial proceedings, and to ensure that their voices are heard and their interests prioritized.¹⁵² Scores on the indicators 'respect for the views of the child' and 'state-civil society

146 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Togo', UN Doc. CRC/C/TGO/CO/5-6, 11 October 2023, para. 18.

147 Ibid.

148 Ibid., para. 19.

149 Ibid., para. 10.

150 Ibid., para. 15.

151 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fourth and Fifth Periodic Reports of Turkey', UN Doc. CRC/C/TUR/CO/4-5, 21 June 2023, para. 5.

152 Ibid., para. 20.

cooperation' have remained stable but require continuous efforts to enhance meaningful participation and protection for children's rights advocates.¹⁵³ The scores on the indicators 'enabling legislation' and the 'allocation of resources for children's rights' have seen negative changes. The Committee therefore calls for comprehensive legislation aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols and for a transparent and participatory budgeting processes.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, improvements on the indicator collection and analysis of disaggregated data are essential to effectively monitor and address the needs of all children, especially those in vulnerable situations.¹⁵⁵

The **United Kingdom** ranks 137th on the Kids Rights Index, a significant improvement by 42 places from last year when it took up the 179th position. In terms of Domain 5, the UK's rank this year is 183rd with a score of 0.083, an improvement of eight places from the previous year. Overall, the data indicates improvement in the UK's performance regarding children's rights. In the Enabling Environment Domain, the United Kingdom has demonstrated consistency in certain areas while showing room for improvement in others. According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, discrimination remains a concern, with persistent issues of racism, bullying, and discrimination against minority and LGBTI children, as well as disparities in the criminal justice system and child poverty.¹⁵⁶ Committee recommendations include urgent measures to address discrimination and overrepresentation in the criminal justice system. Similarly, while the principle of the best interests of the child is recognized in the UK, the Committee pointed out that systematic application across all policies and proceedings affecting children is lacking. It recommends strengthening capacity and implementing child rights impact assessments.¹⁵⁷ Respect for the views of the child is emphasized as well, and the Committee has urged the incorporation of children's voices in decision-making processes and ensuring access to age-appropriate information. Enabling legislation should fully incorporate the CRC into national law and protect all child rights, while budgeting processes should prioritize children's needs, particularly in disadvantaged situations, and avoid regressive measures during economic crises.¹⁵⁸ Positive strides have been made in the collection and analysis of disaggregated data, but further improvements are advised to encompass all areas of the CRC and address specific issues such as violence against children and mental health.

3.6.3. Analysis of underlying indicator data

Based on the Concluding Observations that **Andorra** received in 2023, the country obtained a score of 3 on the Domain 5 indicator 'respect for the views of the child'. It is the only country included in the KidsRights Index that currently has a score of 3 on this indicator.

Jordan is the only other country to have received a score of 3 on any of the 7 indicators of Domain 5 in the KRI 12. Based on its 2023 Concluding Observations, Jordan received a score of 3 on the indicator 'best available budget/resources'.

Among the Domain 5 indicator scores for all countries that received their Concluding Observations in 2023, for some countries reviewed, scores could be generated for indicators for which no scores were available previously ('best interest of the child' (1x), 'respect for the views of the child' (2x), and 'best available budget/resources' (1x)). Except for the indicator 'state-civil society cooperation for child rights', all countries reviewed by the CRC Committee in 2023 now have a valid score on all other indicators.

153 *Ibid.*, para. 22.

154 *Ibid.*, para. 8.

155 *Ibid.*, para. 18 a-b.

156 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland', UN Doc. CRC/C/GBR/CO/6-7, 22 June 2023, para. 19.

157 *Ibid.*, para. 21b.

158 *Ibid.*, para. 8a.

However, 8 of the 19 countries that received their COs in 2023 still do not have a score on the Domain 5 indicator 'state-civil society cooperation for child rights' since the Committee did not address this aspect in their respective COs.

The following table lists the number of countries whose scores declined, went up, or stayed the same for each of the indicators of the Domain Enabling Environment.

Indicator	Number of countries with a lower score	Number of countries with a higher score	Number of countries that retained the same score
Non-discrimination	5	3	11
Best interests of the child	9	1	9
Respect for the views of the child	6	3	10
Enabling legislation	4	1	14
Best available budget/resources	6	4	9
Collection and analysis of disaggregated data	5	8	6
State-civil society cooperation for children's rights	4	2	13

Table 8: Indicator-wise trends in Domain Enabling Environment

For all the 19 countries that received their COs in 2023, 72 of the 133 indicator scores (54%) stayed the same. 39 indicator scores received a downgrade, and 22 indicator scores received an upgrade. The overall trend therefore is slightly negative.

Below follows the analysis per indicator of Domain 5 for the countries that received their Concluding Observations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2023.

Non-discrimination

Nine of the 19 countries that received their COs in 2023 received the lowest possible score for this indicator. This includes Albania, France, Kyrgyzstan, New Zealand, Oman, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo, Türkiye, and United Kingdom. Out of these, five countries maintained the same score as before, while the remaining four (Albania, France, Kyrgyzstan and Oman) received a downgrade from their previous score. Azerbaijan, Ireland, and Jordan are the only three countries of the total of 19 countries that received a higher score than in their respective previous reporting cycles. All moved from the lowest score (1) to the middle score (2). Ten of the 19 countries received a middle score of 2 for this indicator based on their 2023 COs. None of the 19 countries received the highest possible score of 3 on this indicator in 2023. In fact, Liechtenstein, the only country among the 19 that previously received a high score of 3, in 2024 was downgraded to the middle-score based on the new findings of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Best interests of the child

Nine countries received lower scores for the Domain 5 indicator 'best interests of the child' while only one country received an upgrade. In other words, nearly half of the countries that received their COs in 2023 performed worse on this indicator than before, as per the assessment of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

On this indicator, 13 countries received the lowest possible score of 1, including Albania, Azerbaijan,

Dominican Republic, Ireland, Jordan, Mauritius, New Zealand, Oman, Sao Tome and Principe, Sweden, Togo, Türkiye, and United Kingdom. While four countries maintained their previous score of 1. Nine other countries saw a fall in the score received, from the middle score of 2 to a low score of 1. Liechtenstein is the only country that improved its score on the best interests of the child indicator to 2 (while previously data not available). Overall, six countries (Andorra, Bolivia, Finland, France, Kyrgyzstan, and Liechtenstein) received the middle score of 2 on the best interests indicator based on their 2023 COs. None of the 19 countries received a high score of 3 in 2023 or in their respective previous reporting cycles.

This trend indicates an overall relatively poor country performance in incorporating the best interests of the child principle in their respective jurisdictions.

Respect for the views of the child

Nine countries received the lowest possible score of (1) for this indicator based on their respective 2023 COs. Of these nine countries, Dominican Republic, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom maintained the same score as before. Albania, Finland, Ireland, Jordan, Mauritius and Sweden received a lower score for this indicator, from the middle score of 2 to the low score of 1. Nine other countries received the middle score of 2. Kyrgyzstan and Liechtenstein are the only two of these nine countries that showed an improvement (from the low score to the middle score). The remaining seven countries maintained the same score as before. This year, Andorra is the only country that received the high score of 3 for this indicator. Previously data was not available to score Andorra on this indicator.

Enabling legislation

On the indicator enabling legislation, 4 countries received the low score (1), of which Dominican Republic and Sao Tome and Principe received a downgrade from the middle score (2). Andorra and United Kingdom maintained their previously received low score on this indicator. The remaining 15 of the 19 countries received the middle score, with New Zealand improving from a lowest score (of 1) to a middle score (of 2) while Sweden dropped from a high score (of 3) to a middle score (of 2). The remaining 13 countries maintained the middle score, just as they had received in their previous reporting cycles. None of the countries received a high score for the indicator enabling legislation based on their respective 2023 COs.

Best available budget

Eight countries (Albania, Finland, Ireland, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Sweden, Türkiye and United Kingdom) received the lowest possible score for the indicator 'best available budget'. Of these eight countries, Sweden and the United Kingdom maintained the same score as before. However, the remaining six countries witnessed a downgrade from their previous scores – going down from a middle score to a low score. Ten countries received the middle score based on their 2023 COs. Liechtenstein, New Zealand, and Togo improved from a low score to a middle score in this reporting cycle, whereas the remaining seven countries (Andorra, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, France, Kyrgyzstan and Oman) maintained the same score as before. Jordan is the only country that received the highest possible score of 3 for this indicator based on its 2023 COs, improving from middle score.

Collection and analysis of disaggregated data

Five countries received a downgrade, and eight countries received an upgrade on the Domain 5 indicator 'collection and analysis of disaggregated data'. This is the only indicator in the Domain Enabling Environment which recorded an overall improvement in the scores allotted for the countries. For all other indicators the overall trend in scores allotted to countries reflects a negative change.

Nine of the 19 countries received the lowest possible score for the indicator 'collection and analysis of

disaggregated data'. Of these nine countries, Albania, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Sao Tome and Principe, and Türkiye went down from the middle score, while the Dominican Republic, Ireland, Jordan and Sweden maintained the same score as before. The remaining ten countries received the middle score, with many of them improving from their previous low score. Finland, France, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Mauritius, New Zealand, Togo, and the United Kingdom obtained an improved score, while Bolivia and Oman maintained their previously received score. Based on their 2023 COs, none of the countries attained the highest possible score for this indicator.

State-civil society cooperation

Scores on the indicator 'State-civil society cooperation' for eight countries could not be given due to the absence of adequate information pertaining to this matter in their respective 2023 COs. While indicator scores could not be given to seven of these countries in their previous reporting cycle too, this time no score could be attributed to the Dominican Republic either. The latter had earlier received a low score, based on its 2015 COs. Eight other countries received a low score. Albania, Mauritius and Togo received a downgrade from a middle score, whereas Jordan and Sweden were attributed a low score due to the availability of sufficient data now whereas these were previously unavailable. The remaining three countries (Azerbaijan, Bolivia and Oman) received the middle score, while no country could be attributed the highest possible score for this indicator.

Newcomer to the KidsRights Index: Liechtenstein

For the first time, **Liechtenstein** features in the KRI 12. This brings the total number of countries covered in the KidsRights Index to 194, compared to 193 last year. Liechtenstein could not be included in the KRI 11 because scores were only available for two Domains (Health and Education). New scores for Domain 5 on the Enabling Environment for Children's Rights are now available, through the 2023 COs. Based on Liechtenstein's earlier Concluding Observations (2006), four out of the seven indicator scores for this Domain were missing, which is more than half. This resulted in Liechtenstein's exclusion from the Index. The country's latest Concluding Observations of 2023 made it possible to generate scores for three of the four missing indicators. This allowed us to calculate the overall score for the Domain Enabling Environment, which in turn allowed for Liechtenstein to be included in the Index.

Missing data for the countries that feature in KRI 12

Domains

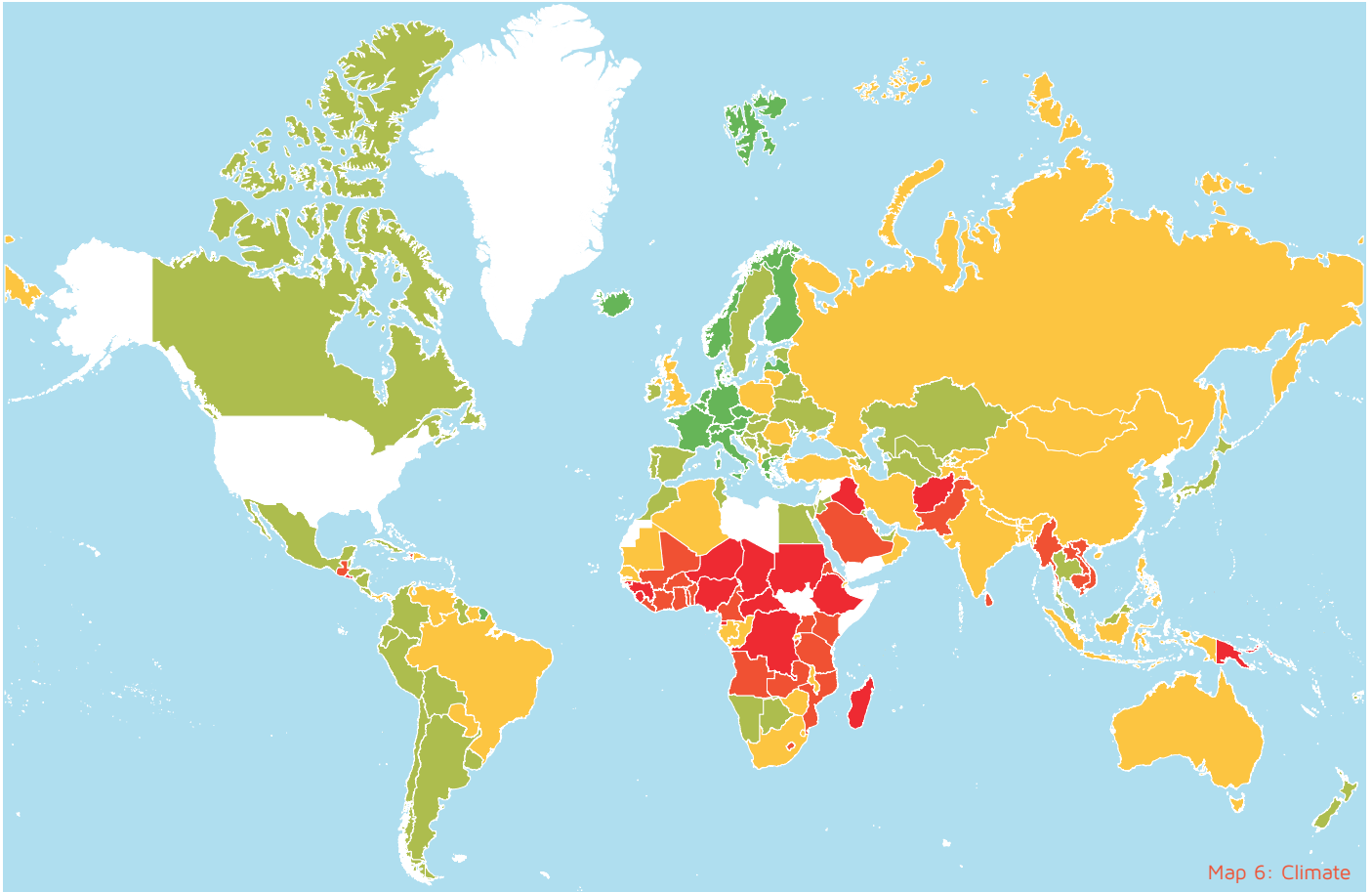
Newly included Liechtenstein is the only country among the total of 194 countries covered that is missing a score for the Domain Life. Seven countries are still missing a score for the Domain Education. 24 countries are entirely missing the scores for the Protection Domain – this is the most of all five Domains.

Since the KidsRights Index explicitly excludes all countries that have not yet reported to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, none of the countries are missing the scores for the Enabling Environment Domain.

Indicators

Out of the 194 countries that feature in the KRI 12, data is only complete for all 20 indicators for 52 countries. 100 of the 194 countries covered are missing the data for at least one indicator in the Protection Domain, which is the highest of all the domains. Only seven of the 194 countries covered are missing the data for the Education Domain, which is the least of all the domains. 11, 70 and 79 countries are missing at least one indicator in the Life, Health, and/or Enabling Environment Domains respectively.

4. INTEGRATING CLIMATE CHANGE INTO THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX: A SECOND PROGRESS REPORT



In last year's KidsRights Index (2023), we made a first attempt to incorporate a climate-related domain into the Index. We did so in response to the reality that, partly already now and more so over time, climate change jeopardizes the realization of whole spectrum of children's rights. A key issue is to ascertain which climate-related indicator(s) would fit the best with (the logic of) the original KidsRights Index and which data meet the Index's quality standards. In 2023 we tested bringing a methodologically sound and substantively useful climate change domain into the KidsRights Index, with scores derived from the Climate and Environmental Factors (CEF) reported in the 2021 UNICEF publication *'The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index'*,¹⁵⁹ and its supplement reprinted in 2023.¹⁶⁰ Incorporating these scores for 158 countries brought about a few changes in the overall rankings for various countries.

However, the scores on Climate and Environmental Factors in the UNICEF Report only measure the vulnerability of countries to climate change. While this is an important feature of a country for understanding the climate change-related risks faced by its children, the CEF has a key shortcoming: it does not measure what countries do to mitigate climate risk. As the first five domains in our Kids Rights Index measure what countries and their governments do on aspects relating to Life, Health, Education,

¹⁵⁹ UNICEF, *'The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index'*, New York, August 2021, p. 79, Table 1, <https://www.unicef.org/media/105376/file/UNICEF-climate-crisis-child-rights-crisis.pdf>.

¹⁶⁰ UNICEF, *'The Climate-Changed Child: A Children's Climate Risk Index Supplement'*, New York, November 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/reports/climate-changed-child>.

Protection, and Enabling Environment for Children’s Rights, it seems that a climate change-related domain (also) measuring a country’s response activity would be a good and epistemically just fit for the KidsRights Index. Both climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts undertaken by states have a direct impact on the rights of children.

Therefore, as a next step, for this year’s KidsRights Index (2024) we changed the data source for the experimental climate change domain and incorporated the scores on Climate Change Mitigation (CCM), as reported in the 2022 Environmental Performance Index.¹⁶¹ An indicator on adaptation might be added in the future and, ideally, another indicator on whether a state acts adequately from the point of view of the common but differentiated responsibility principle too¹⁶². The Environmental Performance Index measures the performance of 180 countries in carrying out activities relating to climate change mitigation. For the KRI 12, we only consider 178 of these countries, as Taiwan and the United States of America cannot yet be included in the KidsRights Index for lack of data (especially on Domain 5 as they are not parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

So, this year (KRI 12) the experimental sixth domain on climate change covers 178 countries, which is 20 more countries than could be incorporated in 2023 (KRI 11) based on the Climate and Environmental Factors drawn from UNICEF’s Children’s Climate Risk Index. The indicators that together compose the scores on Climate Change Mitigation “track trends in countries’ emissions of climate pollutants: four greenhouse gases and black carbon”.¹⁶³ The scores range from 92.4 for Denmark to 8.8 for Iraq, where a higher score means that a country does more to mitigate climate risk. We divided the scores by 100 to make them equivalent in scale with the first five domains.

4.1 Striking results in KRI 12 with Climate Change domain

When integrating the revised Climate Change Domain into the KRI 12, some notable changes occur compared to the original KRI 12 made up of only the five original domains. **Denmark** moves up by 8 ranks to top the KRI 12, when the Climate Change Domain is included. **Luxembourg** falls to the 3rd position overall. Finland improves by 7 ranks and becomes 2nd. **Chad** is the least ranked country (178th) in the overall ranks upon inclusion of the revised Climate Change Domain.

The **United Kingdom** shows the most improvement as it climbs 52 ranks, from being 137th (out of 194) to 85th (out of 178). It is closely followed by **Sweden** which improves by 49 ranks, from being 78th (out of 194) to 29th (out of 178). Other countries that show significant improvement in the overall KRI rankings after the inclusion of Climate Change Domain are Saint Lucia (+45), Botswana (+43), Croatia (+36), Namibia (+36), Dominica (+36), Djibouti (+35), North Macedonia (+34), Grenada (+34), Solomon Islands (+34), Slovakia (+32), Eswatini (+33), Bahamas (+33) and Gabon (+32).

Qatar falls by 51 ranks, from 20th (out of 194) to 71st (out of 178). Other countries that perform significantly worse in the overall KRI due to the inclusion of the Climate Change Domain are Turkey (-42), Algeria (-38), Mongolia (-38), Philippines (-37), Viet Nam (-35) and Egypt (-33).

¹⁶¹ Wolf, M.J., Emerson, J.W., Esty, D.C. de Sherbinin, A., Wendling, Z.A., et al (2022), 2022 Environmental Performance Index, New Haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy, Table 4.1, page 52, <https://epi.yale.edu>

¹⁶² Already in 1992, in the Rio Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Environment and Development, this principle was articulated as follows: “States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth’s ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command”, UN doc. A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I), 12 August 1992, Principle 7.

¹⁶³ Martin J. Wolf, John W. Emerson, Daniel C. Esty, Alex de Sherbinin, Zachary A. Wendling, ‘2022 Environmental Performance Index’, New Haven CT, Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy, 2022, p. 50, <https://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/data/set/epi-environmental-performance-index-2022>.

The consistent efforts undertaken by Denmark and United Kingdom to phase out the use of fossil fuels and policy intervention to transition to renewable sources of energy has been identified as a key factor behind their strong performance in the climate change domain.¹⁶⁴ The Danish Climate Act and the UK's Climate Change Act are being understood as gamechangers in achieving net-zero emissions.¹⁶⁵ The Danish Climate Act set a 70% emission reduction target by 2030 and a legally-binding target of creating a climate-neutral society by 2050. In addition, it creates legal obligations for the government to prepare and present an annual climate programme, including among other things updates on the status of national climate targets, planned initiatives with short-term and long-term effects,¹⁶⁶ and establishing an independent 'Danish Council on Climate Change' to provide recommendations annually to the Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities.¹⁶⁷ In fact, the Danish government has set an even more ambitious target of reaching net-zero by 2045, preponing from 2050.¹⁶⁸ In the face of Russia's war on Ukraine resulting in an increase in fuel costs around the world, Denmark has further reinforced its efforts to reduce fossil fuel dependency with the Agreement on Green Electricity and Heat which aims to reach 100% green gas use in all sectors by 2035.¹⁶⁹

Similarly, the United Kingdom is one of the countries that has committed itself to the legal obligation of achieving net zero by 2050.¹⁷⁰ Government policies on climate change are periodically scrutinized at various levels by the Climate Change Committee, Energy Security and Net Zero Committee, Environmental Audit Committee, and the Environment and Climate Change Committee.¹⁷¹ As per the report 'Mission Zero: Independent Review of Net Zero' (Skidmore Review), the UK is on the right track to achieve net zero by 2050 and should seize the economic opportunity afforded by the global race to achieve net zero.¹⁷²

At the cluster level, Albania and Djibouti are the only countries that moved up by 1 cluster, from the 4th to the 3rd cluster. However, 46 of the 178 countries covered fell to a lower cluster after the inclusion of the climate change domain into the original KRI 12. Of these, 19 countries fell from cluster 1 to cluster 2, 14 countries fell from cluster 2 to cluster 3, and 10 countries from cluster 3 to cluster 4. Therefore, and as was to be expected, when integrating climate change performance into the KidsRights Index, the performance level of a sizable number of countries drops (namely 25.8 per cent of all countries covered). Please refer to Annex 5 to this Report for detailed scores, rankings, and clusters of KRI 12 with Climate Change Mitigation (Domain 6) for 178 countries.

In the year to come, the KidsRights Index Team will continue to work on the, as yet experimental, Domain 6 on Climate Change. Besides updating to the latest available (2024) Environmental Performance Index data, this also entails an exploration of the possibility to include a qualitative dimension into the Climate Change Domain, by analogy to KRI Domain 5, based on the contents of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's Concluding Observations. A first data gathering exercise of the Concluding Observations issued in the last decade has confirmed that, while in 2014 only 12,5 per cent of all Concluding Observations issued by the CRC Committee referred to climate change, in 2023 that was the

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities, *Climate Act (Act. No 965)*, 26 June 2020, Section 7.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Sections 4 and 10.

¹⁶⁸ International Energy Agency, 'Denmark 2023: Energy Policy Review', Paris, p. 21, https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/9af8f6a2-31e7-4136-94a6-fe3aa518ec7d/Denmark_2023.pdf.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁷⁰ Net zero or net UK carbon account refers to 100% reduction in emissions with 1990 as the baseline. See the UK's Climate Change Act 2008, S.1, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/part/1/crossheading/the-target-for-2050>.

¹⁷¹ Nuala Burnett, Tamsin Edwards, and Nicole Watson, 'The UK's Plans and Progress to Reach Net Zero by 2050', *The House of Commons Library: Research Briefing*, 14 November 2023, p. 9, <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9888/CBP-9888.pdf>.

¹⁷² Chris Skidmore, 'Mission Zero: Independent Review of Net Zero', no place, 2023, pp. 6-7, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63c0299ee90e0771c128965b/mission-zero-independent-review.pdf>.

case for 89 per cent of all COs.¹⁷³ So this trend bodes well in terms of the availability of these qualitative data. However, a question is whether the substance of the CRC Committee's remarks is such that it would allow us to allocate a score to a large enough number of countries assessed in the KidsRights Index for this to be a meaningful addition to the experimental Domain 6. We will explore this in the year ahead.

¹⁷³ Karin Arts, 'A Child Rights-Based Perspective on Climate Change: Tool for Stepping Up Accountability', presentation Workshop on 'Children's Rights and the Right to a Healthy Environment – Intersections and Opportunities', International Institute for the Sociology of Law, Oñati, 11 April 2024, slide 12.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Introduction to this report described how the continuation and escalation of the global state of polycrisis impact the rights of children negatively. Violent conflicts in particular, including in Gaza, Sudan and Ukraine, are directly and indirectly affecting children's lives. This highly adversely affects their rights to life, survival and development, education, highest attainable standard of health, special protection in armed conflicts, among many other rights. The cascading effects of the intense impact of armed conflicts on children are likely to be felt for years to come.

Child immunization rates remains in need of attention too. These are crucial for the child right to health but are under pressure in some regions. It is striking and concerning that immunization rates in two relatively affluent regions (Western Europe, and the Middle East and North African) show the least progress among all the nine regions. While some nations showcase commendable progress through proactive measures often supported by international cooperation, others confront persistent challenges stemming from conflicts, economic instability, and vaccine hesitancy.

Due to the availability of sufficient data for Liechtenstein, this year's KidsRights Index covers 194 countries. This is one more than last year and nine more than in the KRI 10 (2022). The 2024 results hint at a slight reduction of the gap in the overall scores between the highest and lowest performing countries in the Index. Whether this will continue remains to be seen.

For the Domain 'Life' (or Domain 1), the availability of new data on the Maternal Mortality Rate ('MMR') has resulted in improved rankings for the Seychelles, United Republic of Tanzania, Bhutan and Ethiopia, while it resulted in a decline in the rankings of Vietnam, Belize, Kenya and Tonga.

On the Domain 'Health' (or Domain 2), while the percentage of underweight children decreased in Djibouti, Uzbekistan, and Nepal, countries such as Portugal, Belgium, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso recorded an increase. Immunization rates continue to falter in some countries even a couple of years post the Covid-19 pandemic. It has increased in some other countries due to a range of reasons, including through international cooperation and alliances, increased advocacy efforts of civil society organisations, and renewed commitment of health departments and healthcare workers. On access to improved sanitation services it is disturbing to observe that, even with substantial increases, not more than 30% of the population in Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, and Madagascar have access to improved sanitation facilities in their respective countries.

In the Domain 'Protection' (or Domain 4), on birth registration, it is very noteworthy that Malawi improved its birth registration rate by a massive 1096 percent, going up from 5.6 to 66.9 per cent, while Nigeria also recorded a significant increase from a mere 30 per cent in 2013 to 57 per cent as per the latest available data. This improvement is rooted in legal and technological developments and coordinated efforts of government agencies and civil society organizations. On the other hand, Somalia recorded 50 per cent less birth registrations, to a meagre 3 per cent from 5.9 per cent before.

In the Domain 'Enabling Environment for Children's Rights' (or Domain 5), the following striking results appeared. The average score of the top ten countries in this domain reduced from 0.770 in KRI 11 to 0.691 in KRI 12. The average score of all the countries in this domain has also reduced from 0.479 in KRI 11 to 0.415 in KRI 12. So, this means that overall performance levels have gone down. New Zealand, Andorra and Kyrgyzstan recorded significant improvement in their rankings in this Domain after receiving new Concluding Observations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2023. For all the 19 countries that received new Concluding Observations in 2023, 72 of the 133 indicator scores (or 54%)

stayed the same. 39 indicator scores (or 29%) received a downgrade, and 22 indicator scores (or 17%) received an upgrade. The overall trend therefore is slightly negative.

And finally, in section 4 above, we presented a second progress report on our efforts to integrate climate change into the KidsRights Index. We have identified a better suited data source in the form of the Environmental Performance Index of the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy. In the coming year we will explore whether the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child which increasingly address the aspect of climate change could be turned into a qualitative CRC-based input into the (still experimental) Climate Change Domain (or Domain 6) which would make that Domain more robust and relevant. In this way, we continue the work in progress that an Index entails.

ANNEX 1: COMPARISON OF MISSING VALUES IN KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 2023 AND 2024

	KidsRights Index 11 (2023)	KidsRights Index 12 (2024)	Change
Number of countries covered	193	194	+1 country
Missing per domain indicator			
Domain Life (1)			
Under five mortality	0	1	-1
Life expectancy	0	0	0
Maternal mortality rate	10	11	-1
Domain Health (2)			
% underweight children	77	70	+7
Immunisation	0	1	-1
Sanitation	1	0	+1
Drinking Water	2	1	+1
Domain Education (3)			
Expected years of schooling – boys	7	7	0
Expected years of schooling – girls	7	7	0
Gender Inequality	7	7	0
Domain Protection (4)			
Child Labour	98	98	0
Adolescent birth rate	11	12	-1
Birth Registration	16	17	-1
Domain Environment (5)			
Non-discrimination	3	3	0
Best Interests	19	19	0
Respect	3	2	+1
Enabling Legislation	0	0	0
Budget/resources	3	3	0
Collection and analysis of data	0	0	0
State-civil society cooperation	66	66	0

ANNEX 2: REGION-WISE IMMUNIZATION RATE TRENDS IN COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE DATA

Region (number of countries in KRI 12 with data available on immunization)	Percentage of countries that recorded an increase in immunization rate	Percentage of countries that recorded a decline in immunization rate
Eastern and Southern Africa (25)	52%	20%
East Asia and the Pacific (31)	45%	32%
Eastern Europe and Central Asia (21)	52%	23%
Latin America and Caribbean (33)	51%	36%
Middle East and North Africa (19)	16%	26%
North America (1)	100%	-
South Asia (8)	50%	12.5%
West and Central Africa (24)	41%	25%
Western Europe (31)	26%	32%

ANNEX 3: REGIONS KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 2024 (194 COUNTRIES)

The latest list of [Regional Classifications by UNICEF](#) was published in June 2023.

EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA - 21 COUNTRIES

Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia (the former Yugoslav Republic of), Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

WESTERN EUROPE - 31 COUNTRIES

Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC - 32 COUNTRIES

Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Korea Republic of, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federates States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam.

SOUTH ASIA - 8 COUNTRIES

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA - 19 COUNTRIES

Algeria; Bahrain; Egypt; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Iraq; Israel; Jordan; Kuwait; Lebanon; Libya; Morocco; Oman; Qatar; Saudi Arabia; State of Palestine; Syrian Arab Republic; Tunisia; United Arab Emirates; Yemen

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA - 25 COUNTRIES

Angola; Botswana; Burundi; Comoros; Djibouti; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Kenya; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mauritius; Mozambique; Namibia; Rwanda; Seychelles; South Africa; Sudan; Eswatini (Swaziland); Uganda; United Republic of Tanzania; Zambia; Zimbabwe

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA - 24 COUNTRIES

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

NORTH AMERICA - 1 COUNTRY

Canada.

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN - 33 COUNTRIES

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela.

8 COUNTRIES NOT (YET) IN THE INDEX






East Asia and Pacific: Niue, Tokelau.

Western Europe: Holy See.

Latin America and Caribbean: Anguilla, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands, British Virgin Islands.

North America: USA (which has not ratified the CRC).

ANNEX 4: DOMAINS & INDICATORS

DOMAINS:		INDICATORS:	
1		Right to Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under five mortality • Life expectancy at birth • Maternal mortality ratio
2		Right to Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of under five year olds suffering from underweight • Immunization of one year old children • % of population using improved sanitation facilities (urban and rural) • % of population using improved drinking water sources (urban and rural)
3		Right to Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected years of schooling of girls • Expected years of schooling of boys • Gender inequality in expected years of schooling (absolute difference between girls and boys)
4		Right to Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child labour • Adolescent birth rate • Birth registration
5		Enabling Environment for Child Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-discrimination • Best interests of the child • Respect for the views of the child/child participation • Enabling legislation • Best available budget • Collection and analysis of disaggregate data • State-civil society cooperation for child rights

ANNEX 5: KRI 12 WITH CLIMATE CHANGE DOMAIN

Ranks KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Ranks KRI 12	Countries	Scores KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Scores KRI 12
1	9	Denmark	0,869	0,858
2	7	Finland	0,855	0,859
3	1	Luxembourg	0,846	0,885
4	2	Iceland	0,82	0,884
5	6	Slovenia	0,817	0,861
6	25	Malta	0,811	0,845
7	3	Greece	0,801	0,878
8	12	Latvia	0,795	0,845
9	36	Barbados	0,79	0,854
10	4	Germany	0,789	0,874
11	10	Austria	0,782	0,854
12	8	Belgium	0,779	0,858
13	14	Czechia	0,778	0,841
14	19	Netherlands	0,768	0,854
15	11	Norway	0,764	0,854
16	16	Italy	0,761	0,834
17	17	France	0,758	0,826
18	32	Switzerland	0,757	0,809
19	34	Antigua and Barbuda	0,755	0,788
20	26	Ukraine	0,754	0,867
21	38	Cuba	0,752	0,809
22	5	Thailand	0,749	0,867
23	27	Estonia	0,746	0,843
24	58	North Macedonia	0,742	0,787
25	13	Portugal	0,737	0,843
26	52	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0,736	0,729
27	30	Bulgaria	0,734	0,729
28	39	Montenegro	0,733	0,777
29	78	Sweden	0,73	0,741
30	47	Cyprus	0,726	0,741
31	22	Japan	0,726	0,791
32	35	Singapore	0,722	0,779
33	67	Grenada	0,722	0,793
34	45	Trinidad and Tobago	0,719	0,793
35	43	Hungary	0,718	0,813
36	50	Cabo Verde	0,715	0,784
37	31	Serbia	0,712	0,784
38	23	Uruguay	0,711	0,784
39	41	Georgia	0,709	0,802
40	21	Kazakhstan	0,708	0,835
41	15	Republic of Korea	0,708	0,835
42	29	Bahrain	0,707	0,778
43	61	Jamaica	0,705	0,761

Ranks KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Ranks KRI 12	Countries	Scores KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Scores KRI 12
44	46	Republic of Moldova	0,701	0,761
45	49	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0,7	0,784
46	57	Tonga	0,698	0,703
47	59	Tunisia	0,695	0,736
48	42	Mexico	0,694	0,736
49	92	Botswana	0,687	0,768
50	95	Saint Lucia	0,686	0,789
51	71	Ireland	0,685	0,759
52	88	Croatia	0,68	0,792
53	51	Lebanon	0,68	0,792
54	37	Peru	0,678	0,792
55	60	Costa Rica	0,677	0,746
56	33	Turkmenistan	0,674	0,709
57	63	Brunei Darussalam	0,673	0,804
58	90	Slovakia	0,673	0,735
59	64	Spain	0,672	0,751
60	53	Chile	0,672	0,751
61	28	Egypt	0,671	0,751
62	75	Samoa	0,671	0,738
63	62	New Zealand	0,671	0,781
64	68	Israel	0,664	0,736
65	101	Namibia	0,664	0,725
66	70	Fiji	0,664	0,725
67	44	Colombia	0,664	0,725
68	72	Guyana	0,663	0,729
69	85	Belize	0,662	0,764
70	82	Ecuador	0,657	0,738
71	20	Qatar	0,654	0,729
72	79	Belarus	0,652	0,776
73	54	Morocco	0,65	0,776
74	69	Nicaragua	0,649	0,72
75	77	Azerbaijan	0,646	0,725
76	48	Malaysia	0,646	0,725
77	73	Kuwait	0,639	0,72
78	83	Honduras	0,635	0,694
79	81	United Arab Emirates	0,634	0,743
80	97	Uzbekistan	0,633	0,742
81	84	Argentina	0,633	0,599
82	98	Jordan	0,632	0,704
83	65	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	0,629	0,709
84	66	Canada	0,629	0,728
85	137	United Kingdom	0,627	0,764
86	94	Bhutan	0,624	0,657
87	89	Kyrgyzstan	0,624	0,705
88	80	Paraguay	0,623	0,624

Ranks KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Ranks KRI 12	Countries	Scores KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Scores KRI 12
89	111	Romania	0,622	0,715
90	114	Suriname	0,619	0,652
91	93	South Africa	0,619	0,682
92	128	Dominica	0,613	0,709
93	112	Lithuania	0,613	0,734
94	56	Algeria	0,612	0,611
95	105	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	0,612	0,709
96	87	Russian Federation	0,611	0,734
97	116	Mauritius	0,608	0,665
98	131	Eswatini	0,605	0,595
99	121	Kiribati	0,603	0,591
100	76	Oman	0,602	0,633
101	91	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0,588	0,665
102	130	Marshall Islands	0,587	0,735
103	99	Tajikistan	0,585	0,595
104	126	Vanuatu	0,585	0,645
105	109	Timor-Leste	0,581	0,642
106	102	Brazil	0,581	0,735
107	139	Gabon	0,576	0,651
108	141	Bahamas	0,576	0,699
109	110	China	0,573	0,611
110	118	Dominican Republic	0,572	0,603
111	74	Philippines	0,571	0,58
112	125	Armenia	0,567	0,683
113	123	Poland	0,566	0,668
114	140	Seychelles	0,566	0,715
115	149	Solomon Islands	0,562	0,591
116	132	Panama	0,562	0,626
117	119	Malawi	0,561	0,591
118	96	Bangladesh	0,557	0,668
119	135	Australia	0,557	0,584
120	120	Senegal	0,554	0,602
121	103	India	0,552	0,591
122	108	Indonesia	0,549	0,602
123	158	Djibouti	0,547	0,556
124	86	Mongolia	0,545	0,584
125	127	Rwanda	0,544	0,564
126	143	Zimbabwe	0,54	0,581
127	113	Turkey	0,538	0,564
128	146	Congo	0,537	0,646
129	136	Maldives	0,53	0,585
130	154	Albania	0,523	0,612
131	124	Nepal	0,521	0,581
132	134	Mauritania	0,517	0,519
133	133	Ghana	0,507	0,612

Ranks KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Ranks KRI 12	Countries	Scores KRI 12 with Climate Change domain	Scores KRI 12
134	157	Gambia	0,507	0,568
135	144	Burundi	0,506	0,534
136	161	Lesotho	0,499	0,53
137	147	Kenya	0,499	0,495
138	145	Guatemala	0,496	0,53
139	122	Lao People's Democratic Republic	0,49	0,495
140	148	Saudi Arabia	0,486	0,515
141	169	Sao Tome and Principe	0,486	0,532
142	129	Myanmar	0,484	0,515
143	107	Viet Nam	0,481	0,548
144	151	Sri Lanka	0,473	0,568
145	150	United Republic of Tanzania	0,471	0,556
146	163	Angola	0,467	0,52
147	156	Uganda	0,465	0,496
148	174	Micronesia (Federated States of)	0,453	0,493
149	165	Cameroon	0,45	0,493
150	162	Haiti	0,447	0,465
151	171	Eritrea	0,444	0,476
152	159	Zambia	0,444	0,472
153	167	Togo	0,442	0,454
154	164	Liberia	0,442	0,468
155	153	Pakistan	0,435	0,468
156	160	Mali	0,432	0,461
157	166	Burkina Faso	0,429	0,463
158	177	Comoros	0,428	0,445
159	168	Benin	0,421	0,445
160	173	Côte d'Ivoire	0,405	0,435
161	176	Cambodia	0,392	0,445
162	175	Mozambique	0,387	0,453
163	181	Guinea-Bissau	0,381	0,408
164	178	Sudan	0,376	0,431
165	179	Ethiopia	0,361	0,407
166	185	El Salvador	0,356	0,376
167	180	Papua New Guinea	0,353	0,376
168	170	Iraq	0,345	0,376
169	184	Sierra Leone	0,34	0,337
170	182	Nigeria	0,339	0,337
171	186	Democratic Republic of the Congo	0,328	0,324
172	190	Equatorial Guinea	0,321	0,314
173	188	Madagascar	0,308	0,313
174	191	Central African Republic	0,295	0,291
175	189	Guinea	0,292	0,29
176	187	Niger	0,286	0,266
177	194	Afghanistan	0,253	0,224
178	192	Chad	0,233	0,224



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