

Violence against children, 25 years after the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Exchange produced in different workspaces with Member States: Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Jamaica, Peru, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay. The following lessons and recommendations are:

- There is broad consensus on the need to continue giving this issue more visibility and breaking down the wall of silence built around it. In this respect, it is considered highly encouraging that there should be eight States in the region that have enacted laws prohibiting corporal punishment for children.
- The experiences presented by the States show the importance of having these judicial frameworks in place, but at the same time, that they should be complemented by policies appropriated by all State agents, as well as by society, and by cultural transformations that foster non-violent relations between adults and children.
- Elements emerge from the experiences reported that contribute to establishing links between different State agencies in relation to the issue of violence against children. In this respect, training that includes operators from different State agencies and institutions are significant, as it encourages rights-based interventions across the State.
- The need for means of following up on and monitoring progress and challenges encountered in this regard should be underscored. Monitoring is not merely a technical activity, but should be viewed as a comprehensive and nationwide surveillance activity, with the wide participation of stakeholders, including children themselves.

- There is particular focus on the different forms of sexual violence and the premature pregnancies that arise as a result of it. These pregnancies increase the vulnerability of teenagers and hinder their personal development, giving rise to replicating cycles of poverty and the violence associated with it. It emerged during the discussions that there was consensus regarding the importance of child participation, multi-stakeholder approaches and promoting the empowerment of adolescent girls.
- The States attending the discussions reaffirmed their ethical commitment towards the eradication of all forms of violence and child exploitation, and pose the need to include the structural, systemic and cultural factors that nourish these forms of violence in the analysis of these issues.