

HOW ARE THE GAMBIA'S CHILDREN?

The Gambia has ratified (pledged to follow the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Thus, the Gambia must respect the rights of the child and listen to what children have to say. Are the rights of the child respected in the Gambia? You and other children in the Gambia are the experts.



1.1 MILLION CHILDREN

2 million people live in the Gambia. 1.1 million are children, and 360,000 of the children are under five years old.



NAME AND NATIONALITY

From the day you are born you have the right to have a name and to be registered as a citizen in your country. 79,000 children are born every year in the Gambia. 3 out of 10 are never registered. There is no documented proof that they exist!



SURVIVE AND GROW

You have the right to life. The Gambia must do all it can to allow children to survive and develop. 1 of 14 children in the Gambia (5,000 every year) dies before the age of 5, usually due to causes that could have been prevented. The number of

children who die has decreased, but is still high.



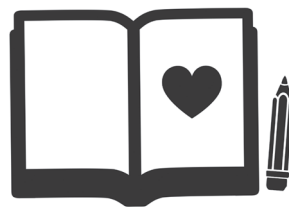
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

You have the right to food, clean water, medical care and the right to privacy when consulting an adult about any health problem. 8 out of 10 children in the Gambia use basic drinking water services. 4 out of 10 children use basic sanitation services. 1,600 children (0-14 years) live with HIV/AIDS.



A HOME, CLOTHING, FOOD AND SECURITY

You have the right to a home, food, clothing, education, health care and security. Almost 5 out of 10 children in the Gambia live in extreme poverty with less than 1.90 US-dollar (94 Gambian Dalasi) a day to live on.



EDUCATION

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



PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE

You have the right to protection against all forms of violence, including neglect, maltreatment and abuse. Only 58 countries have forbidden all forms of corporal punishment for children. Many still allow caning in schools. The Gambia has not forbidden corporal punishment.



HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR

You have the right to be protected against both economic exploitation and work that is hazardous to your health or which prevents you from going to school. All work is prohibited for children under 12. Some children are forced into the worst forms of child labour, such as being debt slaves, child soldiers or used for commercial sexual exploitation. An estimated 100,000 children (2 out of 10 of the children aged 5-14) in the Gambia have to work.



YOUR VOICE MUST BE HEARD

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

