Kenya has ratified (pledged to follow) the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This means that Kenya must respect the rights of the child and listen to what children have to say. Are the rights of the child respected in Kenya? You and other children in Kenya are the experts.

**23.1 MILLION CHILDREN**

48.5 million people live in Kenya. 23.1 million are children, and 7 million 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. 1.5 million children are born every year in Kenya. 3 out of 10 are never registered. There is no documented proof that they exist!

**SURVIVE AND GROW**

You have the right to life. Kenya must do all it can to allow children to survive and develop. 1 of 19 children in Kenya (74,000 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. 6 out of 10 children in Kenya use basic drinking water services. Only 3 out of 10 children use basic sanitation services. 120,000 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. 3 out of 10 children in Kenya live in extreme poverty with less than 1.90 US-dollar (192 Kenyan Shillings) a day to live on.

**EDUCATION**

You have the right to go to school. Primary and secondary schools should be free for everyone. Almost 9 out of 10 children in Kenya 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 54 countries have forbidden all forms of corporal punishment for children. Many still allow caning in schools. In 2010 Kenya became one of the countries that have forbidden all forms of 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 3.2 million children (3 out of 10 of the children aged 5-14) in Kenya 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!

**Sources:** Unicef 2018. Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children 2018.

www.worldchildrensprize.org