

**Child Focused Questions for Inclusion  
in the United 2026 Human Rights  
Scorecard Guidance Note**



## Acknowledgements

This guidance was developed through a collective effort by more than 30 leading child rights and sports experts from around the world.

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## Overview

The following are a series of questions, the answers for which are ‘indicators’ of the extent to which a city and/or municipality is child-friendly, and respects internationally recognized child rights. It is intended to guide a city and/or municipality's efforts as it bids and plans to host a Mega Sporting Event (MSE) like the 2026 FIFA Men’s World Cup. The indicators – the answers to the questions – can be used to measure progress before, during and after an MSE and are designed to be applicable to any country context and any sporting event.

Please note for purposes of this document, the following definitions apply:

- **Child/children** mean(s) every human being below the age of 18 in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- **Child rights** is the internationally recognized term used to describe how children and young people have the same general human rights as adults and also specific rights that recognize their special needs
- **Competition**, in this case, refers to the 2026 FIFA Men’s World Cup being held in the United States, Canada and Mexico
- **Sport**, in this case, is the term used to encompass all forms of organized sport, from grassroots (i.e., recreation) to the competitive level
- **Violations of children’s rights** refers to actions against the human rights of children which are stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child

The first set of questions are the core questions that are essential to include in the Scorecard in line with the Action Plan on Children (referred to as Safeguarding Children in the United 2026 Human Rights Strategy, Section V, sub-section J on pages 57-58).

The second set of questions is related to other Action Plans presented in the United 2026 Human Rights Strategy. These questions highlight key issues for children in each area and we feel are the most important issues to consider when developing those parts of the Scorecard. The issues covered in relation to children are equity, social inclusion, child labour, child trafficking, marketing and communications, public safety and security, disaster emergency preparedness, environmental protections, displacement, and data collection.

When scoring the indicator questions, we recommend using a graduated response as follows:

- No (e.g. red light)
- Developing/in progress (e.g. yellow light)
- Implemented/fully achieved (e.g. green light)

More than 30 partners and stakeholders developed this list and are available to support FIFA as it develops the United 2026 Human Rights Scorecard.

# Core Questions for the United 2026 Action Plan on Children

## Non-discrimination / Anti-discrimination

Salient issue/risk:

- Various forms of discrimination based on age and the intersectionality with other identities (e.g. gender, disability, race/ethnicity, indigenous, immigration status, sexual orientation, religion, birth status, political/cultural affiliation, etc.), as event participants (athlete, volunteer (e.g. ball girl/boy, escort) spectator), workers or residents in the community where the MSE will be held
- Lack of access for individuals and families to competition-related activities, facilities, transportation, information, and materials for example access to children with disabilities, other minority groups because of language, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status among others.

Questions:

- **Non-discrimination:** Does your city and/or municipality have a policy or written commitment that states ALL children (regardless of gender, disability, race/ethnicity, indigenous communities, immigration status, sexuality/sexual identity, religion, birth status, and political/cultural affiliation) have access to your city's sport, recreation, culture, and educational events and programmes?

## Commitment to Children's Rights<sup>1</sup>

Salient issue/risk:

- Host city and/or municipality and partners do not fully align local laws, policies, and programmes with international law and standards pertaining to children's rights
- Lack of understanding among key decision-makers of the risks for children specific to the competition and other related events leading up to and surrounding the World Cup
- Not taking views of children into account in decision making related to the MSE<sup>2</sup>, which includes not having meaningful and inclusive consultations with children on matters that impact their lives in relation to the MSE

Questions:

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<sup>1</sup> Children and young people have the same general human rights as adults and also specific rights that recognize their special needs. Children are neither the property of their parents nor are they helpless objects of charity. They are human beings and are the subject of their own rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the rights that must be realized for children to develop to their full potential. The Convention offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development. By recognizing children's rights in this way, the Convention firmly sets the focus on the whole child. The Convention recognizes the fundamental human dignity of all children and the urgency of ensuring their well-being and development. It makes clear the idea that a basic quality of life should be the right of all children, rather than a privilege enjoyed by a few. <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/child-rights-why-they-matter>

<sup>2</sup> Note: this requirement is referenced in the FIFA bid criteria

- **Formal commitment:** Has your city and/or municipality made a formal commitment to the protection, safeguarding, and well-being of children?<sup>3 4</sup>
- **Children’s advocate:** Does your city and/or municipality have a full-time children’s advocate, Ombudsperson or an equivalent<sup>5</sup> professional at the city and/or municipal level, or equivalent professional, to promote children’s rights and who has the power to take action to ensure the best interests<sup>6</sup> of children?
- **Children as stakeholders:** Does your city and/or municipality consult with children as key stakeholders in community consultations and/or through a children’s advisory committee or youth council, on issues related to children’s safety and participation in sport and delivery of the competition?

## Reporting Violations and Access to Remedy for Children

Salient issue/risk:

- Lack of mechanisms for reporting violations against children and/or a lack of knowledge of how to report violations among children and their families
- Lack of knowledge among children on how to seek remedy and a process to obtain it
- Privacy for children when reporting violence and abuse or seeking remedy

Questions:<sup>7</sup>

- **Reporting and response mechanism:** Does your city and/or municipality have clear mechanisms in place for receiving and managing reports of abuse of children, in compliance with relevant legislation, that is applicable to sport and which will be in place and communicated during the competition?<sup>8</sup>
- **Training and capacity building for staff and volunteers:** Is your city and/or municipality training or partnering with local agency(ies) or organization(s) to train staff, volunteers and local officials who will be involved in the competition (police, law enforcement, educators,

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<sup>3</sup> Cities shall have at least one of the following to get full credit/score for this question:

- Has a Children’s Act or child rights legislation which sets out the city’s statutory child protection and safeguarding measures
- Made a commitment to adhere to the [Children’s Rights and Business Principles](#)
- Made a commitment to adhere to the Agenda 2030 and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) particularly SDG targets [16.2](#), [8.7](#), [5.3](#)
- Have an agreement with a child rights organization to work together to apply a child rights-based approach to actions and interventions at the local level
- Has an official recognition as being a Child-Friendly City by UNICEF or designated by another entity as being child-friendly
- Published a report on the situation for children in your city and/or municipality in the past 5 years that is publicly available on the internet and is accompanied by an action plan
- Made a publicly available commitment to how the city and/or municipality will promote and protect the rights of children in conjunction with the competition bid document

<sup>4</sup> It is important to evaluate this question looking at how well the commitment addresses those most at risk due to their gender, age, disability, socioeconomic factors, etc.

<sup>5</sup> For example, Child and Youth Advocacy Centres in Canada: <http://cac-cae.ca/organizations/>

<sup>6</sup> Best interest of the child is a child rights principle, which derives from Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which says that “in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration”.

<sup>7</sup> Additional related questions considered for this section: *Does the city and/or municipality fund projects to teach children about their rights or bridge gaps between law enforcement and at-risk youth that are meaningful and complementary to the formal justice system, and engage youth voices to improve justice for all?*

<sup>8</sup> Additional points should be given if the mechanisms are gender-sensitive and accessible for individuals with disabilities.

social workers, healthcare providers, sport coaches, community leaders, stewards, etc.) on how to manage reports of abuse?<sup>9</sup>

- **Hotline:** Does your city have a free hotline (e.g. telephone, text messaging, etc.) for reporting concerns and violations of rights to or by children?<sup>10</sup>
- **Helpline:** Does your city have a free helpline (e.g. telephone, text messaging, etc.) for children to seek help or advice if they have experienced abuse, exploitation or harms<sup>11</sup>, or have other concerns?<sup>12</sup>

## Child Protection & Safeguarding

Salient issue/risk:

- Violence against and among children (physical, emotional and sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, bullying which also includes cyberbullying, etc.) as athletes, volunteers, and spectators, community members, etc.
- Risk of children being separated from their parents or caregiver at or around FIFA events and related activities

Questions:<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Additional points should be given if the trainings taking into account different needs and vulnerabilities of different groups of children, including but not limited to girls and children with disabilities.

<sup>10</sup> Additional/partial points for the following:

- *If the hotline is mandated by city, State and/or National legislation*
- *If the hotline is available in all official languages in the country*
- *If the hotline will be linked to an interpretation service during the period of the competition for languages not commonly spoken in the country*
- *If the hotline is staffed 24/7 by those empowered to act on the information received*
- *If the hotline has a formal procedure in place to manage the information it receives in a timely manner*
- *If a plan is in place on how to inform people and promote the hotline in the lead up to and during the competition*
- *If the hotline is promoted with the sport and recreation communities*
- *If there are specific plans on how to inform the public about the hotline in the lead up to the competition*

<sup>11</sup> Common types of harms include: emotional/psychological, physical, sexual, and neglect

<sup>12</sup> Additional/partial points for the following:

- *If the helpline is mandated by city, State and/or National legislation*
- *If the helpline is available in all official languages in the country*
- *If the helpline will be linked to an interpretation service during the period of the competition for languages not commonly spoken in the country*
- *If the helpline is staffed 24/7 by those empowered to act on the information received*
- *If the helpline has a formal procedure in place on how to manage and respond to the information received in a timely manner*
- *If there is a plan in place on how to inform children and young persons about the helpline in the lead up to and during the competition*
- *If the helpline is promoted with the sport and recreation communities*

<sup>13</sup> Additional questions considered for this section: Does your city have a policy or legal decree prohibiting online harassment or cyberbullying? Do you have a safe recruitment process to ensure all workers and volunteers who will be involved with the competition and in direct contact with young people present a criminal record check, sign a Code of Conduct that specifically addresses child safeguarding and protection, and participates in safeguarding training? Do the venues with specific responsibility for hosting events related to the competition (stadia, fanzones, etc.) have safeguarding policies and procedures? What percentage of local sport and recreation programs and leagues in your city and/or municipality have made a formal commitment to safeguarding?

- **Child protection:** Are there statutory<sup>14</sup> or government agencies responsible for the protection of children<sup>15</sup> in your city and/or municipality who are also involved with the competition planning and setting up a clear communication channel between the event organisers and existing reporting structures? If yes, which agency(s) and how are they involved in the planning?
- **Safeguarding:** Has your city and/or municipality made a specific commitment to safeguarding<sup>16</sup> in sport and requires local recreation and sport programs, clubs and leagues to have safeguarding policies and procedures to receive city and/or municipality funding and/or use of facilities?
- **Family reunification:** Does your city and/or municipality have formal procedures in place for family reunification if a child gets lost/separated from their parents or caregiver in or around events related to the competition and in the lead up to the competition will there be training on the reunification procedures?
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### Child-Friendly Safe Public Spaces – Sport, Recreation, Leisure, Play and Cultural

Salient issue/risk:

- Lack of safe sport, recreation, leisure, play and cultural spaces near the competition venue
- Insufficient participation in regular physical activity among children<sup>17</sup>

#### Questions:<sup>18</sup>

- **Legacy:** Do you have a legacy strategy that includes investing in activities that will improve children’s participation levels in sport and will result in new, free to use, sports and recreation infrastructure that is accessible to all children, regardless of disability, socio-economic factors, gender, ethnicity, etc.?

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<sup>14</sup> Statutory means it is related to or set by laws or statutes.

<sup>15</sup> Child protection refers to preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children.

<sup>16</sup> According to the International Safeguards for Children in Sport, safeguarding is “...the actions we take to ensure all children are safe from harm when involved in our clubs and activities’.” They set out [8 Safeguards](#) covering all areas of safeguarding practice. In some countries there is relevant national legislation like in the United States with the *Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017* . For more information on the International Safeguards for Children in Sport click [here](#) or view the [full report](#).  
<sup>17</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/22-11-2019-new-who-led-study-says-majority-of-adolescents-worldwide-are-not-sufficiently-physically-active-putting-their-current-and-future-health-at-risk>

<sup>18</sup> Additional questions considered: *What percentage of city and/or municipal sports programs are accessible for and actively have children with disabilities participating out of the total number of sports programs offered for children? What percentage of non-profit organizations registered in your city and/or municipality receive targeted public city and/or municipality funding to deliver quality physical education, physical activity, recreation, sport or cultural activities for children? What percentage of the city and/or municipal budget is allocated to build or maintain public play, recreation and sport spaces? What percentage of the overall education budget for the city and/or municipality is allocated to physical education? What percentage of schools report full/partial implementation of quality physical education as defined by UNESCO’s Quality Physical Education policy guidelines? Do organizations receive targeted public funding from the city and/or municipality to deliver programs specifically addressing violence and antisocial behavior in sport?*



# Questions for Inclusion in the Non-Child Specific Scorecard Areas

## Equality of Opportunity and Inclusivity

Salient issue/risk:

- Lack of resources allocated to ensure the inclusion and equal opportunity for marginalized groups to access sport and recreation programmes, including but not limited to children with disabilities and girls.
- Children with disabilities are excluded from fully participating in the MSE.

Questions:

- Does your city and/or municipality annually allocate resources to ensure children with disabilities can access sport and recreation programmes and ensure the programmes are accessible?
- Does your city and/or municipality annually allocate resources to ensure girls can access sport and recreation programmes and ensure the programmes are accessible?
- Does the proposed stadium where the competition will take place meet existing national, state, and/or city accessibility standards? Are there guidelines related to the implementation of the standards that will be followed for the competition?

## Child Labour

Note: This is an initial list of issues and risks that will be further developed by Georgetown Law and the coalition of organizations working on labour-related indicators.

Salient issue/risk:<sup>19</sup>

- Child labour involved in the construction of new venues, on the site of the competition and in the supply chain of goods and services used for the games (e.g. food industry, hotel industry, hospitality sector, agriculture sector, etc.)
- Impact of migrant worker exploitation on families and their children (for example inadequate pay and remittances, non-payment of wages that can lead to child labour to support family members left behind, family separation, lack of parental rights to travel back home in emergencies, etc.)
- Children in volunteer positions without due safeguarding measures (e.g. ball girl/boy).
- The minimum age for volunteers and whether they are aware and have received training on how to protect themselves and report incidences of concern

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<sup>19</sup> ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour which includes placing the child in situations of sexual exploitation, trafficking, illicit activities, sale of drugs, etc. [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C182](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182)

## Child Trafficking<sup>20</sup> <sup>21</sup>

Note:

Salient issue/risk:

- Risk of children being trafficked with the influx of visitors to the city for the event and during the construction phase with the influx of migrant workers

Questions:

- In the lead up to the competition will your city/municipality, or a local partner organization, implement an anti-trafficking campaign and training with relevant industries and child protection agencies (e.g. immigration officials, police, hospitality, hotels and other sources of accommodation, transportation<sup>22</sup>, and venues, etc)?
- Is the city and/or municipality partnering with civil society organizations to raise awareness and prevent children from being trafficked?
- Is law enforcement in the city and/or municipality trained and equipped to manage cases of child trafficking, both domestic and international?

## Child-Sensitive Marketing & Communications

Salient issue/risk:

- Mass-media, marketing/sponsorship, and advertising materials are not in the best interests of children and harmful to them
- Children and their families lack access to information (e.g. government informing a community about forthcoming changes) and accessible communication regarding the event (e.g. inclusive facilities)
- Lack of understanding among children about their rights; lack of understanding among the community at large about children's rights

Questions:

- Does your city and/or municipality have a [child-friendly](#) communications policy that ensures that communications and marketing do not harm children? If yes, does it address accessibility for children with disabilities and those from marginalized groups including those without internet access?
- Does your city and/or municipality have a specific section of its website specifically for children?

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<sup>20</sup> Relevant international treaties: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

<sup>21</sup> Under the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Palermo Protocol), trafficking for the purpose of exploitation includes sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery and servitude. **In the case of children, no coercion or deception is required for a case to be considered trafficking in persons.** As stated in the [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children](#) (page 4).

<sup>22</sup> Transportation includes airports, taxis, transport services such as Uber, bus and train stations.

- Will your city and/or municipality develop guidelines for how to make communications around the competition safe and inclusive for children?
- Does your city and/or municipality have guidelines for the use of children in its communications that will be applied to the competition as well?
- Does your city and/or municipality have media guidelines for coverage of sport involving children, or coverage that is targeted at young audiences?
- Is there a procedure in place to identify, assess, and monitor risks to and impacts on children related to content and visuals used in the city or municipality's communications?
- Is there a formal mechanism in place for receiving, processing, investigating, and responding to complaints from citizens and the general public, including children, about content and visuals relating to children? How are complaints recorded and tracked?
- Does your city and/or municipality have a stated policy that its published materials on sport, recreation, culture, and education include a diverse representation of children (e.g. ability, age, race, ethnicity, gender)?

## Child-Sensitive Public Safety and Security

Salient issue/risk:

- Security and safety risks (e.g. separation, kidnapping, access to illegal substances, etc.) linked to the MSE (e.g. street closures, large crowds, increase in traffic).

Questions:

- Does your city and/or municipality have a policy addressing the safety and security of children around major events?
- Does your city and/or municipality have a focal point on child safety in and around stadiums and as part of security plans?
- Does your city and/or municipality require security officers to undergo training in child protection?
- What is the rate of homicides by the police in your city and/or municipality, in general, and below 18 years old? Does your city and/or municipality track homicides of children by source?
- What are the policies your city and/or municipality has towards children in street situations?

## Child-Sensitive Disaster Emergency Preparedness

Salient issue/risk:

- Lack of availability of emergency services that are sensitive and responsive to the particular needs of children (e.g. child identification, the reunification of children with their parents or caregivers, availability of childcare until reunification, access to trauma counselling, etc.)

Questions:

- Does your city and/or municipality have specific policies and procedures on how to address the needs of children in all types of emergencies (e.g. man-made and natural)? If yes, how are local authorities made aware and trained in these policies and procedures?
- Have mental health professionals or other professionals in your city and/or municipality been identified who could be called upon to identify and respond on an emergency basis to trauma in children resulting from adverse events, both man-made and natural?
- Does the city and/or municipality have a plan to inform all visitors, including children, about key emergency numbers to call or places to go if they need assistance?

## Child-Sensitive Environmental Protections

Salient issue/risk:

- Negative social-environmental impacts of the competition for children (this could relate to the actual event or it could relate to infrastructure development before the event)

Questions:

- Do your city's environmental and resource-use policy and targets take into account potential and actual impacts on children?
- Is there a process in place to identify, assess, and monitor environmental risks to and impacts on children and pregnant women?
- Is there a formal grievance mechanism in place for receiving, processing, investigating and responding to complaints
- What were the monthly averages of air pollution levels in your city and/or municipality over the past year? Please provide data for PM 2.5<sup>23</sup>, NO<sub>2</sub><sup>24</sup>, PM<sub>10</sub><sup>25</sup>.

## Displacement of Children and their Families

Salient issue/risk:

- Displacement (including forced eviction/relocation) of children from their homes or communities in relation to FIFA events, including children in street situations, and the impact it has on the children (e.g. loss of housing, lack of access to basic services and play areas, disruption of education, loss of friendships, etc.)

Questions:

- Does your city and/or municipality have a policy or commitment that relates to the resettlement of populations that takes into account the impact on children and their families? Does it cover any resettlement needed as a result of building new infrastructure for the competition?

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<sup>23</sup> The 24-hour concentration of PM<sub>2.5</sub> is considered unhealthy when it rises above 35.4 µg/m<sup>3</sup>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www3.epa.gov/airnow/no2.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/air-trends/particulate-matter-pm10-trends>

- Is there a process in place to identify, assess, monitor, and mitigate risks to and impacts on children in land and natural resource use and acquisition, including resettlement?
- Is there a formal grievance mechanism in place for receiving, processing, investigating, and responding to complaints related to risks to and impacts on children in land and natural resource use and acquisition, including resettlement?

## Child-Sensitive Data Collection

Salient issue/risk:

- Event-related data is collected in a manner that violates children's rights to privacy and protection

Questions:

- Does your city and/or municipality have written policy and procedures regarding the protection and privacy of personal data it collects on or from children?