

## Country Statement

Colombia

August 2022

*In 2019, Colombia joined the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, aiming at accessing international best practices and technical and financial assistance to prevent violence against children. In the same year, Colombia announced the launch of a National Alliance to End Violence against Children, led by the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare and with the following objectives: i) to coordinate and strengthen the intersectoral response in preventing different forms of violence against children; and ii) to provide comprehensive support to government authorities to prevent violence against children.*

In 2018, Colombia implemented the first National Survey on Violence against Children and Adolescents - VACS, which evidenced that the country faced great challenges to put an end to all forms of violence against children and adolescents throughout the territory. Unfortunately, we encountered that 40% of those surveyed had been victims of some type of violence before reaching 18 years of age, and that 72% of these violations occurred at home. As a country, we fully understand that violence against children threatens social and economic development, as well as individual and collective growth.

In this same year, Colombia included within its National Development Plan the goal of reducing by 14.3% the national rate of violence against children and adolescents, since the reduction of violence against children and adolescents is a state commitment made by Colombia as a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. To achieve this, it was established the need for a national strategy of inter-institutional and sectoral articulation that transcends time, focused on the prevention and comprehensive care of all types of violence against those who are the present and the future of our nation.

Consequently, in 2019, Colombia announced the creation of the National Alliance on Violence against Children, led by the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare - ICBF and with the participation of ministries, international cooperation and civil society organizations, whose objective is to ensure the consolidation of protective spaces in all environments where children and adolescents develop themselves (individually, at home, and in public, institutional and digital spaces), through the establishment of prevention and care actions.

Likewise, in the same year, the country joined the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children as a Pathfinding country, which required the adoption and adaptation of the INSPIRE model to prevent the incidence of violence against all children in Colombia. The adoption of this model resulted in the formulation of a 2021-2024 National Action Plan, which includes 184 initiatives (115 of public institutions, 49 of civil society, and 20 of international cooperation) in the following components: i) strengthening of the legal framework; ii) social mobilization; iii) risk prevention; iv) protective environments; v) timely and comprehensive care; vi) institutional strengthening; and vii)

data and evidence. The implementation of this NAP is monitored by ICBF as the leader of the National Alliance to End violence against Children and Adolescents.

In June 2021, the Executive Committee of the National Family Welfare System approved the National Action Plan, which has been territorialized through the formulation of 32 Departmental Action Plans to prevent violence against children and adolescents throughout the country. Currently, 15 out of these 32 Departmental Action Plans on violence against children have been approved by instances of the National Family Welfare System, and the remaining departments are in the process of approving their plans.

NAP's monitoring and evaluation system aims to generate information and evidence on the implemented actions on the prevention and care of all forms of violence against children and adolescents in Colombia. In this sense, it includes output and outcome indicators in the short, medium, and long term.

In order to guarantee that violence against children and adolescents remains a priority for Colombia in the future and that the National and Departmental Action Plans continue to be executed at the national and sub-national level, three strategies were implemented:

1. Institutionalization: the "Coordination and Implementation of the National Alliance on Violence Against Children Working Group" was formally created by Resolution 3796 of 2022, as a part of ICBF's General Direction, to coordinate and implement the National and Departmental Action Plans with other governmental entities, international cooperation organizations, and NGOs.
  2. Adjustments to the regulatory framework:
    - Law 2081 of 2021: declares criminal action imprescriptible in the case of crimes against sexual freedom, integrity and formation, or the crime of incest, committed on minors under 18 years of age.
    - Law 2089 of 2021: prohibits the use of physical punishment, cruel, humiliating, or degrading treatment and any type of violence as a method of correction against children.
    - Law 2137 of 2021: establishes the National Early Warning System for the prevention of sexual violence against children and women in Colombia.
  3. Ongoing prevention strategies (among others):
    - Model of analysis for the prevention of rights violations.
    - National Pedagogical and Prevention Strategy for Physical punishment, Cruel, Humiliating, or Degrading treatment of children.
    - Guardians of Children elite group.
    - Family-school alliance
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Additionally, in February 2022, the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children invited the Government of Colombia, through ICBF, to be a member of its Executive Committee and Pathfinding Progress Working Group.

Colombia ratifies its commitment to implement actions to prevent all forms of violence against children and prioritizes the strengthening of all environments where children spend their lives. In this regard, the following actions will continue to be a priority:

- Follow up on the implementation of the National Action Plan during the period 2022 to 2024, making annual reports, an intermediate and final evaluation on the implementation of the entire Plan, to measure the impact on national indicators and the reduction of the national rate of violence against children.
- Implement the National Strategy for the Prevention of Physical Punishment and Cruel, Humiliating, or Degrading Treatment of children in all the country's territories.
- Establish guidelines for the definition of evidence-based strategies for the prevention of violence against children.
- Mobilize resources to implement actions aimed at the prevention and care of all types of violence against children, in partnership with international cooperation agencies for the implementation of the National Action Plan and Departmental Action Plans.
- Promote social mobilization for the prevention of violence against children to generate cultural transformation of norms, behaviors and imaginaries that naturalize and normalize violence against children.
- Identify new risky environments that threatens the rights of children and develop innovative strategies to prevent any harm and violence against children.



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