



Global Initiative to
**End All Corporal Punishment
of Children**

BURKINA FASO

BRIEFING FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW – 3rd session, 2008

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Corporal punishment of children breaches their rights to respect for human dignity and physical integrity and to equal protection under the law. It is recognised by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other treaty bodies, as well as by the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children, as a highly significant issue, both for asserting children's status as rights holders and for the prevention of all forms of violence.

The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (www.endcorporalpunishment.org) has been regularly briefing the Committee on the Rights of the Child on this issue since 2002, and since 2004 has similarly briefed the Committee Against Torture, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Human Rights Committee. There is growing progress now across all regions in challenging this very common form of violence against children. But we are concerned that many States persist in ignoring treaty body recommendations to prohibit and eliminate all corporal punishment. We hope that the UPR Process will give particular attention to states' response, or lack of response, to the concluding observations from treaty bodies, on this and other key issues.

In June 2006, the Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted General Comment No. 8 on "The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment", which emphasises the immediate obligation on states parties to prohibit all corporal punishment of children, including within the home. Other treaty bodies, and regional human rights mechanisms, have condemned all corporal punishment. In October 2006, the report of the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children was submitted to the General Assembly. It recommends universal prohibition of all corporal punishment, setting a goal of 2009.

Summary

This briefing describes the legality of corporal punishment of children in Burkina Faso, despite the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to prohibit it. We hope the Review will strongly recommend that the government enact explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings, including the home.

1 Legality of corporal punishment in Burkina Faso

1.1 Corporal punishment is lawful in the **home**. The Penal Code punishes ill-treatment of children and deliberate assault causing bodily harm, but there is no explicit prohibition of all corporal punishment. A statistical review by UNICEF found that 56% of children aged 2-14 experienced minor physical punishment in the home in 2005-2006.¹

1.2 Corporal punishment is prohibited in **schools** and in the **penal system**.

1.3 In **alternative care settings**, corporal punishment is prohibited in institutions but there is no explicit prohibition relating to fostering or adoption.

2 Recommendations by human rights treaty monitoring bodies

2.1 In 2002, following examination of the state party's second report, the **Committee on the Rights of the Child** recommended legal prohibition of corporal punishment in schools and other institutions and in the home (CRC/C/15/Add.193, para. 37).

¹ UNICEF (2007), *Progress for Children: A World Fit for Children – Statistical Review, Number 6, December 2007*