

## Resources which can support your initiatives:

- The **All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)** is the largest association of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Indigenous churches in Africa.  
[www.aacc-ceta.org](http://www.aacc-ceta.org)
- The **World Council of Churches (WCC)** website has a wealth of resources for the Churches' Commitments to Children:  
[www.oikoumene.org/resources-children](http://www.oikoumene.org/resources-children)
- **Together for Girls:** Proven solutions and best practices to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children and youth.  
[www.togetherforgirls.org/svsolutions](http://www.togetherforgirls.org/svsolutions)
- Child-friendly video: A child-friendly video encourages children concerned to contact a toll-free Child Helpline. (Produced by UK-based **Childline** - [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk))  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCA6EhBhiC8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCA6EhBhiC8)
- **INSPIRE:** Seven strategies for ending violence against children.  
[www.end-violence.org/inspire](http://www.end-violence.org/inspire)
- **WePROTECT:** Tackling online risks with the international movement dedicated to national and global action.  
[www.weprotect.org](http://www.weprotect.org)
- **The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OSPC):** The link [www.ecpat.org/opsc](http://www.ecpat.org/opsc) will take you to a summary of this protocol, where the full guidelines and the resources can be accessed.

## Online self-help tools for potential offenders

**The Lucy Faithfull Foundation's** "Stop It Now" campaign has anonymous online self-help tools for potential offenders.  
[www.get-support.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.get-support.stopitnow.org.uk)  
[www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.get-help.stopitnow.org.uk)

**Save the Children Finland** provides an anonymous "self-help" website to understand and evaluate these feelings. If in doubt, talk to a trusted doctor to find help.  
[www.savethechildren.fi/selfhelp](http://www.savethechildren.fi/selfhelp)



World Council  
of Churches



**Helping Children Out of the  
Shadows and Into the Light**

CHURCH RESOURCES FOR ENDING  
SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



The divine light shines most brightly in the smiles of children. So Christians have always acknowledged their sacred duty to nurture children and protect them from harm.

Now the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) are together promoting the “Out of the Shadows” campaign through their “Churches’ Commitments to Children” programme to support local churches and regional partners in protecting children and adolescents from sexual violence. The campaign can help churches identify important issues and develop ways to address them.

### What is the Out of the Shadows Index?

The Out of the Shadows Index, which was developed by The Economist Intelligence Unit, measures how national actors in 60 countries address child sexual abuse and exploitation. The index, which focuses on policies, practices and standards, reveals that much more needs to be done to achieve the United Nations’ goal of ending all forms of violence against children by 2030.

The index evaluated critical issues in each country, including education and awareness-building, reproductive health, gender norms, victim support, law enforcement and child sexual abuse online.

### What does this mean for the churches’ efforts to end child sexual abuse?

This index shows that there are proven steps that all countries can take right now to end child sexual abuse. Civil society actors, including churches, are well placed to raise awareness of threats of child sexual abuse, put in place preventive measures, and support victims, especially among the most vulnerable.

**God is light; in God there is no darkness at all.**  
1 John 1:5

## Key findings from the Out of the Shadows Index

Achieving Target 16.2 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals means ending all forms of violence against children by 2030. The **Out of the Shadows Index** research shows that:

**Progress is possible** even when resources are limited.

**Gaps need to be addressed** in the protective conditions for children even in the wealthiest countries. Many countries have strong legal frameworks for protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation, **but policies are not sufficiently implemented.**

Child sexual abuse includes non-contact abuse, such as exposure to sexual language and images. **Such violence is intimately linked to mental health challenges later in life.**

Complete rankings and country summaries are available at [www.outoftheshadows.eiu.com](http://www.outoftheshadows.eiu.com)

**Boys are overlooked:** Nearly half of the 60 countries do not have legal protections for boys within their child rape laws, while only 19 countries collect data about sexual abuse of boys.

Many victims do not disclose child sexual abuse for many years and are hindered by time limits on filing charges in response. **Only 1% of victims of child sexual abuse have sought professional help.**

**Engagement is needed to better protect children against online child sexual abuse.** It is alarming that mobile telecoms associations in only 15 out of the 60 countries have identified sexual violence against children as a clear priority.

**Together, we can help children affected by sexual abuse to step out of the shadows and into the light.**