

UN Reports June 2019 2

Report on the Committee of Rights of the Child - CRC

Kingdom of Tonga – The Tonga islands are a constitutional monarchy regrouping 170 islands in 3 different clusters in the South Pacific Ocean. Only 36 islands are inhabited. The total population is 100,651 (in 2016), 65% live on the main island, 34% of the total population are under 18 years.

Tonga is trying to align its laws with CRC standards, but there remains quite a few discrepancies: - age for penal offence responsibility is 7 (lowest international age), legal age for marriage is 15 and corporal punishment still widely used. Death penalty is possible from age 15 (last case in 1980). Traditionally children are expected to listen and obey, thus freedom of speech is not encouraged. There are three safe houses for women and children in need of shelter due to domestic violence. Children on streets are a major problem. Officially the minimum age for employment is 15. There is a high rate of juvenile pregnancies. Abortion is prohibited by law (even in the case of rape). Infant mortality (under 5) is high. Road accidents involving children reach a high rate.

Botswana – Botswana is a democratic republic, member of the commonwealth, the state is independent since 1966. Before that date it was ruled by the British Government. Many laws from that date are still effective and in need of update and harmonization. The total population is 2.2 million (2016), 32% are under 14 years, only 4% are over 65. Life expectancy is 58 for men and 60 for women.

Education is a major priority in the 2015-2020 plan. There is free health care and education for all children. The official language is English, 90% of the total population also speak the local Tswana and 10% speak Afrikaans (in communities close to the border with South Africa).

The economy has been growing at a rate of 9% for the last decade, it moved from being one of the poorest countries to being one of the wealthiest in 3 decades. 48% of income is derived from mining industries. Botswana is the third world producer of diamonds. Botswana has signed the Anti-trafficking act in 2014 and the amendments in 2018. There is a recent registry with people barred from working with children. The marriage age has been raised from 16 to 18 in 2018 in accordance with the CRC standards. Child mortality is one of the consequences of malnutrition, but has decreased since 2007. The government is also addressing social and traditional cultural attitudes that contribute to child mortality. Orphans and children born out of wedlock are being stigmatized. CRC recommends actions in schools to inform the children. Data collection remains a challenge as are other CRC requirements due to lack of funding.

62nd Commission on Narcotic Drugs

In the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to counter the World Drug Problem, adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drug in 2009, Member States established in 2019 as a target date for the goals set out in the Political Declaration. The goal of 2009 was “for States to eliminate or reduce significantly and measurably illicit drug supply and demand, the diversion and trafficking of precursors and money laundering”. Evidence shows that these targets are unachievable and in 2017 World Drug Report, UNODC states clearly that the ‘drug market is thriving’.

Opioids is a generic term applied to a variety of substances ranging from naturally- occurring opiates, such as opium and morphine, to synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl and tramadol and semi-synthetic opioids such as heroin, as well as new psychoactive substances (NPS) with opioid effects such as acetyl fentanyl. The number of NPS starting with 4 in 2012 grew up to 46 in 2019!

“Listening First” is an UNODC initiative. Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow up healthy and safe.

“Strong families Programme” is a family skills prevention programme for families living in challenged settings.