

Advice from

the United Nations



Public Budgets: How Governments Should Spend Money for Children's Rights



The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

is a set of promises that almost every government* in the world has made to all children in their country.

*A government is a group of people that runs the country.



Children have many rights:



Participation and Freedom

such as free speech and religious choice



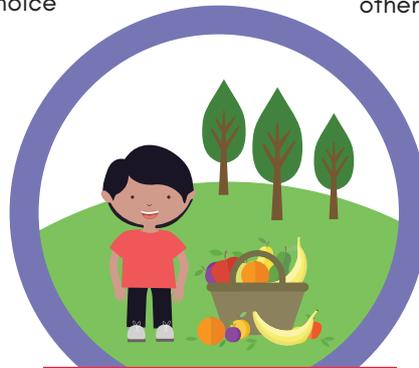
Relationships and Care

in the family and when others care for them



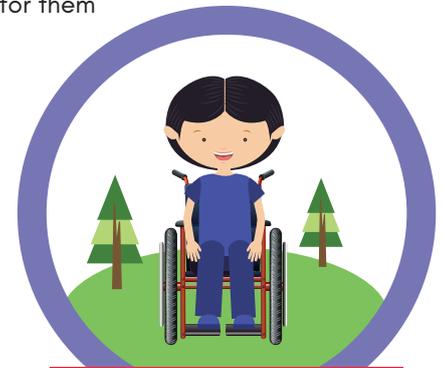
Education, Rest and Play

such as going to school and taking part in cultural activities



Health and Welfare

such as visiting the doctor and having a safe and healthy home



Special Support

for some groups such as children with disabilities, and protection from harm

Whenever governments make decisions, there are four very important rights they should remember. Every decision should...



Treat all children equally

Aim for what's best for children

Help children grow and be healthy

Take children's views seriously



The Convention on the Rights of the Child



Committee on the
Rights of the Child
UNITED NATIONS

The **Committee on the Rights of the Child** is a group of experts that gives advice to governments about how to keep the promises they made to children under the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

General Comment



Sometimes, this group of experts writes reports called **General Comments** to help governments understand how to keep their promises about children's rights.

This **General Comment** is about **Public Budgets** and **Children's Rights**.

It explains how governments should do their job and spend money so that children have their rights met.



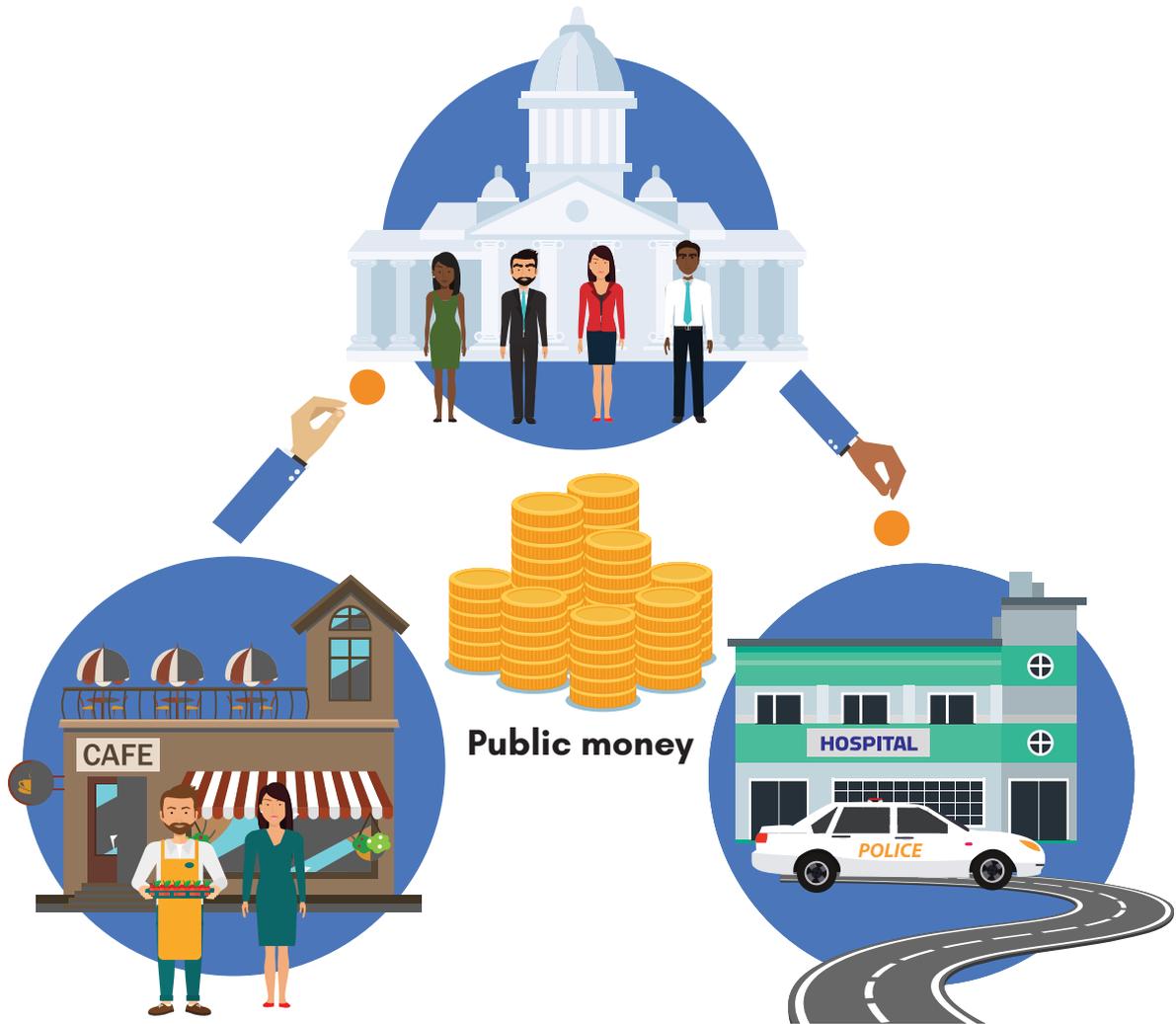
Before it wrote this **General Comment**, the Committee got advice from children and adults all over the world.

Children's Rights and Spending

It costs money to make sure children are having their rights met.

All governments have public money.

They have to make important decisions about how to use it.



Governments **raise** public money by collecting it from businesses and workers. They may also borrow money, or receive aid and support, from other countries.

Governments **spend** public money on everything that keeps the country running, like building roads and hospitals, training police officers and paying teachers.

Governments have promised to use as much of their money as possible to make sure that all children in their countries have their rights met equally.

How Governments Should Spend Money For Children's Rights

Steps of Public Budgeting

'A Public Budget is a plan the government makes for spending money.'

Before making a budget, governments need to find out...

- ✓ How children are doing
- ✓ How spending will affect children
- ✓ What difference public spending is making to children, including different groups
- ✓ How much money is needed
- ✓ What else government should do to deliver children's rights



In all steps of Public Budgeting, governments need to use public money wisely.

This means the money should go to the right place, be used in the right way and not be wasted. It is important that everyone can see and understand how the money is being spent and if it is making a difference to all children's lives.

How Governments Should Spend Money for Children's Rights

Involving Children



Governments need to keep their promises to children through every stage of public budgeting...

- ✓ Making a Budget
- ✓ Spending the Money
- ✓ Checking what Happens



Governments should...

- share information about plans and spending so that everyone can understand
- make sure everyone, including children, can check if the government is keeping its promises to children

This General Comment recommends that governments should pay attention to children's views on public spending. It includes advice from children all over the world...

Provide budget information in ways that are easily understood

Publish records of how the money is spent

Do not forget to include **children with special needs** in your budgets

Spend money fairly and wisely

Investment in our families is also an important way of securing our rights

It is impossible for you to invest in us if you do not ask us what to invest in!
We know, you should ask

Plan well. There should be enough budget to provide for the rights of all children

Don't spend money on something that is useless - be efficient, save money

Give **more money to minority children** and children who need it most

Ask us if we think that your decision is wise before spending!



Produced by the Centre for Children's Rights, Queen's University Belfast, with advice from a group of children aged 10-14 and the Child Rights Connect Working Group on Investment in Children and with funding from Save the Children, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Plan International and REDLAMYC.

2016

Based on General Comment No. 19 (2016) on Public Budgeting for the Realization of Children's Rights (art. 4).



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs



Save the Children



The Centre for
Children's Rights

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Social Sciences,
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