

# State of the World's Children 2024 (SOWC-2024) Report

Posted at: 22/11/2024

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**Context :** The **State of the World's Children (SOWC) Report** is the **flagship annual publication** by the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**. It is renowned for its comprehensive analysis of global issues affecting children and offers insights into the key challenges and opportunities impacting their lives.

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### Key Features of the SOWC Report

#### 1. Focus on Key Issues:

Each year, the report explores a critical issue affecting children worldwide. Topics range from:

- **Children with disabilities.**
- **Conflict and war.**
- **Child labour and urbanization.**
- **Early childhood development** and other pressing challenges.

#### 2. Comprehensive Analysis:

The report is a detailed study of global trends affecting children, providing evidence-backed **data and statistics** to support its findings.

#### 3. Global Relevance:

It reflects the voices of children and young people, emphasizing their perspectives on the kind of future they envision.

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### Highlights of the SOWC 2024 Report

This year's report, launched on **20 November 2024**, coincides with **World Children's Day**, UNICEF's annual day of action for children. The theme is **"Listen to the Future"**, focusing on the voices of young people about the world they want to see.

### 1. Three Megatrends Impacting Children (2023-2050):

The report highlights three major global shifts that will shape children's lives in the coming decades:

- **Demographic Changes:**

- By 2050, the global child population will stabilize at approximately **2.3 billion**, with notable regional shifts.
- **India, China, Nigeria, and Pakistan** will account for over a third of the global child population, with India leading at **350 million children**, despite a reduction of 106 million compared to current numbers.

- **Climate and Environmental Crises:**

- Nearly **1 billion children** face extreme vulnerability to **climate hazards**, with Indian children disproportionately affected.
- By 2050, **eight times more children worldwide** will face **extreme heat waves** compared to the 2000s.
- Hazards like **extreme heat, floods, droughts, and air pollution** will severely impact children in countries like India.

- **Frontier Technologies:**

- Emerging technologies will shape education, healthcare, and opportunities for children, but the benefits will depend on closing the **digital divide**.

### 2. Digital Divide:

- In 2024, **95% of people in high-income countries** are connected to the internet, compared to just **26% in low-income countries**.
- This stark disparity limits opportunities for children in developing regions.

### 3. Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI):

- India ranked **26th out of 163 countries** globally in 2021, indicating significant risks for children.
- **Indian children are highly vulnerable** to climate-related threats like heat waves, floods, and air pollution.

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## Why the SOWC 2024 Report Matters

- **Call to Action:**

The report serves as a wake-up call for governments, organizations, and communities to address the challenges posed by **climate change, demographic shifts, and technological inequities**.

- **Focus on Vulnerabilities:**

By highlighting disparities—such as those in internet connectivity and exposure to climate risks—the report emphasizes the need for **inclusive policies** that prioritize children's welfare.

- **Vision for the Future:**

It amplifies the voices of children, encouraging the world to “**Listen to the Future**” and create an environment where every child can thrive.

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## Conclusion

The **State of the World’s Children 2024 Report** is not just a statistical document but a roadmap for the future. It urges global leaders and societies to address systemic issues like **climate vulnerability** and the **digital divide**, ensuring that the next generation grows up in a world of opportunity and equity. By acting now, we can secure a better future for the world’s children.



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