



**CHILDREN LEADING CHILD RIGHTS
ADVOCACY DURING COVID AND BEYOND**

#CovidUnder19 Scrapbook





AUTHOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the #CovidUnder19 Scrapbook—a tribute to the remarkable resilience, creativity, and dedication of young advocates championing children's rights and shaping global policies.

This scrapbook is a collective creation of the children and young people who have been at the heart of the #CovidUnder19 Initiative. It captures the essence of our journey, showcasing our achievements, the impact we've made, and the personal stories that have defined our path. It also highlights the inspiration we hope to pass on to the future generation of young advocates.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to the success of #CovidUnder19. To the children and young people whose voices and passion drove this initiative, and to the adult allies and partners whose support made it possible—your dedication has been the cornerstone of our success.

A special note of gratitude goes to Terre des hommes (Tdh) for the visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to bringing #CovidUnder19 to life.

As you turn these pages, you'll witness the inspiring legacy of young change-makers. We are proud to carry forward the legacy of empowering young voices and advocating for a brighter future for every child. We hope these stories and milestones inspire you as much as they have inspired us.

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Introduction



The [#CovidUnder19](#) Initiative, launched in April 2020, is a global coalition led by [Terre des hommes](#) (Tdh) that brings together children, young people, civil society organizations, academics, and child/youth-led initiatives to advocate for the inclusion of children in decision-making processes and policies that impact their future.

The initiative is rooted in the belief that children and young people have unique insights, experiences, needs, and aspirations that must be taken into account when crafting policies, and programs. The key aspects include:

- **Upholding Children's Rights:**
 - #CovidUnder19 aims to ensure that children's rights are respected and upheld when designing policies and interventions.

- **Promoting Child Participation:**
 - The initiative reinforces child participation methodologies in international child rights advocacy. It emphasizes the active involvement of children and young people in shaping policies that affect their lives, ensuring that their voices are heard and valued.

- **Intergenerational Partnerships:**
 - #CovidUnder19 seeks to move beyond child participation to foster intergenerational partnerships for child rights research and advocacy at the international level. This means bridging the gap between adults and young people to work together effectively in advancing children's rights.

In May 2020, #CovidUnder19 launched the Life Under Coronavirus survey, based on the child-rights based research methodology developed by the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast. The survey was widely endorsed and supported by international and national civil society organizations across the world.



Journey Highlights



EVENTS

[Child Leading the Future - A child and youth-led celebration of World Children's Day 2022](#)

[An Interactive Dialogue with the SRSGVAC about the Climate Crisis - #ReportingToChildren](#)

[Eyes on the Horizon: Rallying Children and Young People for Intergenerational Partnerships and Meaningful Participation in SDGs Summit \(HLPF 2022\)](#)

[Building Back Better - Learning from the Crisis for Human Rights \(CYP HUB and CREAM Webinar\)](#)

[2021 Child Rights Festival - Re-imagining a better world for every child](#)
[Session 1](#), [Session 2](#), and [Session 3](#)

[#CovidUnder19 High-Level Launch Event 2020](#)



PUBLICATIONS

[Channelling "The Changemaking Power of Children" to Drive Environmental, Peace, Security and Digital Policies for the Future: An Intergenerational Research Paper](#)

[Justice for Children Policy Brief: Intergenerational Partnership through an Intersectional Lens](#)

[#CovidUnder19 Campaign Toolkit - The Rainbow Healers](#)



PODCASTS AND VIDEOS

[An activist since his teens](#)

[Climate change: Fighting to be heard](#)

[Our Right to a Safe & Healthy World Free from Violence](#)

[Inspiring ways to end violence \(GPEVAC\)](#)

[Youth and #CovidUnder19 \(YouthsTalk\)](#)



STATEMENTS

[#CovidUnder19 Submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in response to the consultation on General Comment 26 on Children's right to a healthy environment with a focus on climate change](#)

[Open Letter to the United Nations Secretary-General: Addressing Children's Invisibility in 'Our Common Agenda'](#)

[#CovidUnder19 Intergenerational Statement to the 2021 & 2022 HLPF](#)

[A statement on behalf of #CovidUnder19 at the UN Human Rights Council](#)

[Open Letter to World Leaders: Uphold children & young people's rights in the digital world](#)

[#CovidUnder19: Life Under Coronavirus - Results of the Survey](#)



ARTICLES

[Ingredients for Meaningful Relationships and Participation](#)

[Life Under Coronavirus: Children's Views on their Experiences of their Human Rights](#)

[Partnerships with Children as Core to Partnerships for the Goal \(p.10\)](#)

[Children as agents of positive change \(UN SRSG VAC\)](#)

[Children's Right to be Heard: We're Talking; Are You Listening? \(Joining Forces\)](#)

[Inspiring Children's Futures Announce Latest Learning Report: Children's Participation](#)



Participants Stories and Testimonial



Amrit
Peer Mentor

From the very beginning, #CovidUnder19 felt like a family- a place where my ideas and experiences were valued and heard. Being a part of this initiative has been an empowering journey, showing me that even in challenging times, children and young people can come together to make a real difference.



Januka
Peer Mentor

#CovidUnder19 for me is a lifetime experience that I will forever cherish because it has been a journey of learning and growth. It's where I felt valued, confident, and most importantly where I felt safe and supported –a place that felt like home. Being part of the journey where one feels the sense of belongingness is truly magical, and I got to taste this magic. Platforms like #CovidUnder19 must be encouraged.



Ojaswi
Peer Mentor

I learnt the importance of using my voice to call attention to the current state of child rights globally and the power it holds in inspiring more children and young people to raise their voices for change as well. I hope I can continue to be a vehement activist and supportive ally to children & young people around the world, & will continue working hard for incarcerated youth, and young survivors of sexual violence & trafficking.



Ruju
Peer Mentor

At #CovidUnder19, we exchanged ideas and worked towards child advocacy together. Now that I am an adult, I will continue to advocate for children since I believe they have every right to express themselves and they deserve a better tomorrow. So to ensure they have access to a beautiful future, I will continue to advocate for their rights and do my best to protect their future.



Participants Stories and Testimonial



Konstantinos
Peer Mentor

Having been involved with the initiative since its creation I am really proud to see how far it has come and how much the team has achieved. I am happy to say that #Covidunder19 is not only a successful research project but most importantly a global community that created friendships for life and helped us get through the difficult times of the pandemic and lockdown. I will always look back into the my time with #Covidunder19 with love and appreciation for everyone involved and the whole project.



Splendour
Peer Mentor

I remember our meetings on Wednesdays and then later on Fridays, where everyone feels free and safe to share feedback, solutions, and comments. I never imagined being part of an online community that truly respected everyone's values and backgrounds. #CU19 broke the record, showing me how a diverse group of children and young people from all walks of life can come together, collaborate, and create something meaningful, all while honoring each person's unique perspective. I could write an entire encyclopedia of my experiences as a peer mentor with #CU19, but to put it simply—it's been life-changing!



Brian
Child Advisor

My biggest revelation [from #CovidUnder19] is the power of togetherness, the power of the collective and just how much change we young people actually can make when we start to not just come together but to think together. I loved every moment of my time at #CovidUnder19 and made a tonne of friends and memories all of which I really really treasure, but an interesting moment for me was when me and another member were invited to give a guest lecture in a University on Child rights. My hope for my activist future is to of course make meaningful change and influence other young people positively.



Dhruv
Child Advisor

For the past almost two years, #CovidUnder19 has transformed into so much more: a safe space, a supportive family, and an excellent resource to learn about child rights beyond the conventions and books. To me, this council, each member and allied adult represents a hope for a better future for children, and all our work forms a strong foundation for the inspiring steps we will take to materialize this aspiration!



Participants Stories and Testimonial



Jeshis
Child Advisor

#CovidUnder19 is an emotion that has developed within everyone of us providing different opportunities and a whole new perspective to see the world. It has taught us how people from all over the globe come together and initiate change.



Preyashi
Child Advisor

#CovidUnder19 connected me to some of the most passionate and hard working child rights advocates and taught me so much about community building, the importance of being vocal and what I can do to help. I am grateful for CU19 for giving me the platform to speak my mind and be a part of such an amazing community! I hope more youth advocates come forward and vocalize their thoughts and I hope we can continue to do our part to bring about a change for the better to protect children and their rights.



Jeevan
Child Advisor

At #CovidUnder19, we got the opportunity to get connected to each other's realities and with differences in nations, we were united in activism that led us to this wonderful journey.



Osish
Child Advisor

My hopes are that Child rights will be accessible to every child in the world. The life has its ups and downs but #CovidUnder19 was a family and water that helped small plants like me to grow and learn.



Purnima
Child Advisor

At #CovidUnder19, I got opportunities to present my thoughts and ideas here and gained experience of working for children. I would love to continue this progress to be able to work for child welfare even in the future.



Participants Stories and Testimonial



Prottush
Child Advisor

In 2022, I joined Covidunder-19 as a child advisor. I respect and thank the people and organizations around the world who are working for children's rights. I think your contribution will play an outstanding role in building the future of children and the human development of the world. To all the children of the world, you are not just a child but the defender of your rights. Enjoy your rights. Wishing everyone a bright future.



Samikshya
Child Advisor

I have learned how I can advocate for child rights as well as my voice matters for a better future of tomorrow's children, which I had a dream about. My hopes are for a better future where a child with a happy face lives free with happiness and with whatever the child wants, including basic needs like education, food, family, clothing, play and so on.



Rodoshee
Child Advisor

#CovidUnder19 helped me keep my hopes up and gave me the opportunity to express myself and act meaningfully. We had the opportunity to learn, express ourselves as children and youth and act together for ourselves. I served as a Child Advisor for two years in a row. I learned to keep my head up during adversity, express myself confidently in front of High Ranking Officials, create projects for my community and work as an ambitious Human Rights Defender to bring positive changes to this world and establish a place for unheard children and youth.



Sumaita
Child Advisor

This morning, last morning, the next morning and every morning to come after, justice to all is the ultimate goal. Whether a child is growing up in the streets of New York or one in the gollis (streets) of Dhaka, their voices must be heard. Responsibility is mine, yours and all of ours. It's time to wake up.



Sumaiya
Child Advisor

#CovidUnder19 gave me a voice I didn't know I had. I was able to raise awareness about the struggles and suffering of vulnerable children in my country on an international level, shedding light on the daily battles these young warriors face.



Impact and Outcomes

Children's participation is irreplaceable—only they can truly voice their concerns. It's adults responsibility to create safe and welcoming spaces for children and young people where they can share their problems and seek solutions. #CovidUnder19 successfully provided such a platform, enabling children and young people to advocate for their rights, create impactful advocacy, and use research to support their voices in policy-making. They participated in global discussions, including the UN High-Level Political Forum, UN Human Rights Council, and other key policy forums, where they advocated for their rights and contributed to shaping global policies.

Osish, Dhruv and Januka at the UN High-Level Political Forum, July 2023

Osish participated as a child delegate at the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York, advocating for the inclusion of young voices from the Global South in SDG policy processes. His participation emphasized the importance of intergenerational partnerships and highlighted the critical need to include young people in shaping SDGs. His contribution influenced the ongoing discussions on the global goals, ensuring that young people, especially from underrepresented regions, are actively engaged in policy development.

Similarly, Dhruv and Januka participated remotely as delegates, where they spoke about the four strategic levers of justice reform, particularly focusing on justice for children. Their participation reinforced the message that justice for children is a cornerstone of global justice. They highlighted the urgent need for legal reforms that cater to children's rights and ensure they are treated equally in the global justice framework.

Dhruv at the Conference on Human Rights Defenders, May 2023

Dhruv represented #CovidUnder19 at the Conference on Human Rights Defenders in Vienna. They met with the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders to discuss the challenges faced by children and youth engaged in human rights work. Their participation raised awareness about the challenges children face while advocating for their rights, particularly the obstacles to accessing resources and protection for young human rights defenders.



Tin at the Terre des hommes Innovation Bootcamp, March 2023

Tin represented #CovidUnder19 at the Terre des hommes Innovation Bootcamp in Lausanne, where he and other young participants prototyped solutions to empower children and integrate them into decision-making processes. The bootcamp resulted in innovative proposals for involving children in organizational decision-making and project design. Tin's participation demonstrated that child empowerment is essential for building democracies and shaping the future. His involvement highlighted the value of children's input in innovation, with Tin saying, "Child empowerment is what democracies are built on."

Open Letter to UN Secretary General, November 2022

Amrit, on behalf of the initiative, presented an Open Letter to the UN Secretary-General, urging the inclusion of children in Our Common Agenda, the UN Youth Office, the Summit of the Future, and the Digital Compact. His presentation highlighted the need for children's active participation in shaping policies that affect their future, reinforcing their importance as stakeholders in global policy-making.

Prathit at the UN Human Rights Council, September 2021

Prathit addressed the UN Human Rights Council, delivering a powerful statement on behalf of #CovidUnder19, calling for equal treatment of children and inclusive spaces for youth in global policy processes. He raised voice for children's rights to be fully integrated into human rights discussions. His participation was pivotal in advocating for the recognition of children as partners in building a better future, advancing the global conversation on child inclusion in policy-making processes.



Life Under Coronavirus Survey, May 2020

#CovidUnder19 launched the “Life Under Coronavirus” global survey in May 2020, to explore how the pandemic affected children’s lives. In partnership with the Centre for Children’s Rights at Queen’s University Belfast, the survey was designed by children and child rights experts, targeting children aged 8-17 to understand their experiences and how they wished to be involved in solutions. Children played active roles in each phase—from designing the survey to analyzing data and launching results.

DID YOU KNOW?

26,258 children from 137 countries participated in the survey.

270 children from 26 countries helped design the survey.

The survey was available in 27 languages and an Easy Read version for children with intellectual disabilities was available.



Messages and Well-wishes

Najat Maalla M'jid

Najat Maalla M'jid
SRSB VAC, United Nations



I was involved from the beginning, through dialogues with children and youth, participating in their actions and amplifying their voices and actions. I learned a lot from them, regarding their strong communication and creativity skills. I was inspired and I am still inspired by their tireless engagement.

Laura Lundy
Professor, Centre for Children's Rights, Queen's University Belfast

I was one of the team of researchers from the Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast who helped to develop the initiative along with Terre des hommes and many amazing young people. We supported CovidUnder19 by working with children and young people to design the global survey that captured the experiences of thousands of children and young people. We also wrote the briefings. We learnt so much from our child advisors and this process is still informing how we do our global surveys now and into the future. We also learnt so much from the results and I am committed to taking these forward in every way I can and at every opportunity to demonstrate how crucial it is to engage with children and young people at times of emergency. This project is one of my favorite - and most important - ever and it was a privilege to work with you all on it.



Laura Lee
Consultant, IICRD



I have had the privilege to be involved with #CovidUnder19 in many activities, including co-conducting workshops, co-analyzing, co-writing and collaborating on the partnership with the C4PLog. It has been incredible to have the opportunity to get to know amazing people who are passionate, caring, and show such dedication and hope for the future! I have often come into sessions feeling the heaviness of all around me, and left feeling inspired and rejuvenated. What a gift! My hope is that each person will continue to be a shining light for child rights in their sphere of influence, and that the relationships and networks will continue to promote child wellbeing in lasting ways around the world.



Messages and Well-wishes

Najat Maalla M'jid

Indah Abayan
Program Officer, CRC Asia



I have been involved since 2020 when the application was first disseminated to different stakeholders. At a time when interactions were challenging due to the pandemic, the application allowed for a platform for both adults and children to share their thoughts on service delivery and other aspects of child rights advocacy. However, it was also challenging to have inputs from those not in the digital environment. I hope that the foundations laid by #COVIDUnder19 in terms of collaboration will make co-creation of initiatives between and among children and adults in different fields the norm in different societies and platforms.

Isabel Zbinden
Terre des hommes

From day 1, #CovidUnder19 has been a powerful, inspiring and much-needed initiative. It has proven that with intergenerational work and cross-cultural collaboration, we can move mountains and achieve significant progress for child participation. I have been inspired and humbled by the incredible strength, the unwavering perseverance and the exemplary leadership of the children and young people I have had the chance to work with during this time. Thank you to them, and to all the partners involved in #CovidUnder19 for making it possible. The work continues!



Kristen Hope Burchill
Terre des hommes



#CovidUnder19 wasn't only the largest, global child participatory research and advocacy project to take shape during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was also an unforgettable journey of mutual support in the face of an unprecedented crisis. Being part of #CovidUnder19 reaffirmed to me two essential insights about child rights work : 1) Even when we think we are all facing the same storm, we are all in different boats: the research highlighted specific patterns of exclusion for marginalised and disenfranchised children, which required adapted responses. 2) We are stronger when we stand together: the advocacy highlighted the imperative to work in solidarity with those facing the biggest challenges.



Looking Forward

Are you a child or a young person? Thinking of starting your advocacy journey?



[Click here to access the Toolkit](#)

Do you want to start your climate advocacy journey?



[Find the Resource List here](#)

As we continue to advocate for children’s rights and empower young voices, it’s essential that you, as a young person, stay engaged in shaping the future. Whether you’re just starting your advocacy journey or looking to expand your impact, there are countless opportunities to get involved and make a difference. We’ve highlighted resources and tools to help you on your path and ensure your voice is heard globally.

Did you know children and youth produce meaningful research?



[Check our Research Paper here](#)

Opportunities for Youth
A platform to find youth-focused opportunities worldwide

Restless Development
Supporting young people’s journey to become leaders and amplify that leadership in communities worldwide

Youth2030 Pulse Newsletter
Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth

[Check out these opportunities](#)



THANK YOU!



Terre des hommes
Helping children worldwide.

