



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2017**

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Dear reader,

2017 was the last year, when every human being born in the new millennium was still a child.

How have these 17 years done for the world's children, and how are we going to move forward for and with the next generation?

By ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and/or its Optional Protocols, all member States of the UN have recognised children as holders of human rights and have committed to making children's rights a reality for all children. The CRC is the most comprehensive and most widely ratified human rights treaty, which makes it the most important international legal instrument to protect and promote a good life for a third of the world's population. Since its entry into force in 1989, the CRC has helped to concretely and sustainably improve national laws, policies, practices for children and for entire societies, even in contexts where talking about human rights is sensitive.

Even though this makes the CRC the keystone of human rights, in reality it is often forgotten and not implemented in the comprehensive way as it should be. Fundamental and global challenges are at the heart of this: the widespread perception of children as passive subjects to be taken care of, the approach of children's rights as separate from human rights, the longstanding focus on children's socio-economic and cultural rights to the detriment of their civil and political rights, and increased questioning and threats to international human rights commitments.

THE GENERATION UNDER 18 IS BOTH THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE. CHILDREN'S VIEWS, PERSPECTIVES AND IDEAS ARE A RESOURCE, THAT HUMANKIND CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO IGNORE!

Through our advocacy, Child Rights Connect plays a central role in promoting the understanding and the implementation of a child-rights based approach for strengthening of the overall framework for the protection and promotion of children's rights. We work to ensure that children's voices are heard and taken seriously from grassroots to the international level at the United Nations. Through our network, we establish links to

every country in the world, so that UN recommendations and standards are used to sustainably improve the life of every child.

This overall advocacy seems somewhat abstract as it is often difficult to directly track its effects to concrete improvements for specific children. But it is urgent for us to understand its relevance and join our efforts, as this is the only way to lay a solid ground for the full realisation of the rights for all children. Only through a child-rights based approach to development, the SDGs will be achieved. Only through a child-rights based approach to humanitarian action, children in conflict situation will be protected from violence and abuse. Only through a child-rights based approach to human rights defenders, children will be able to speak up and take action to promote human rights, based on their evolving capacities.

INVESTMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY FOR AND WITH CHILDREN IS OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE TO CONTINUE BUILDING A PEACEFUL GLOBAL SOCIETY!

Join this debate, dear reader! Share your views and help us talk about the relevance of a sound international children's rights framework to make sustainable change in every country! Help us raise the message about the importance of children's rights for a global society based on the principles of human rights today and in the future, and for a peaceful world!

Beatrice Schulter
Director
Child Rights Connect

About Us

Child Rights Connect is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation founded in 1983. We are the world's largest network for children's rights. We link those who stand up for children's rights to the United Nations (UN) human rights system. Through our 80 member organisations coordinated by a Secretariat in Geneva, we reach every country across the globe.

**CHILD RIGHTS CONNECT
ENVISIONS A WORLD IN
WHICH ALL CHILDREN ENJOY
THEIR RIGHTS, AS DEFINED
BY THE CONVENTION ON THE
RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.**

Our Approach

Network Approach

Being the largest children's rights network, we can establish geographical and thematic links on a global scale to influence the realisation of children's rights globally.

All our programme work is implemented as a network, coordinated by the Secretariat in Geneva. In addition to connecting members of Child Rights Connect, we also connect other relevant actors among civil society and the UN human rights system.

Capacity Building, Technical Assistance, and Advocacy

We provide **technical assistance** to children's rights defenders to identify the best UN entry points to advance children's rights. We also provide information on how to effectively engage with these entry points and connect children's rights defenders to the relevant organisations, units and people.

We provide **capacity building** on the UN human rights mechanisms to children's rights defenders. Capacity building is done through training and seminars, as well as providing training materials on our website. Direct training is preferably provided to member organisations of Child Rights Connect who can ensure multiplication of the knowledge through their organisation and networks at regional, national and local levels.

We implement **advocacy** to raise awareness and understanding, as well as to effect concrete positive change in children's rights policies and practices within and throughout the UN human rights system and among States.



What Makes Us Unique?

- We have a **global outreach** and we speak to the UN with one voice.
- As **trusted partner of the UN** we have unique access and leverage to advance children's rights.
- We **promote the indivisibility** of children's human rights, **ensuring they are taken into account as a whole.**
- We strive for **sustainability** in our work with civil society and UN actors.



Child rights-based approach

The realisation of children's human rights for all children requires a child rights-based approach to global development. With a child rights-based approach all development actions consider children's rights. This not only leads to the realisation of children's rights, but also to sustainable systemic change for a prosperous and fair society.

International human rights treaties, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), establish a framework in which the State (the duty bearer) needs to fulfil its duties, and the right holders (in the case of the CRC the children) can claim their rights. If this framework is functioning well, progress is made towards the realisation of human rights. Since States do not always fulfil their duties, and since right holders, especially children, are not always capable of claiming their rights, civil society has an important role to play to make the human rights framework effective:

States must be held accountable at national and international levels and pressured to fulfil their duties.

Children need to be empowered to participate and claim their rights at all levels, within their communities, countries, as well as at international level.

2017: Connecting individuals and organisations locally, nationally, regionally and internationally

Child Rights Connect reaches out to children in every country in the world

Child Rights Connect is the world’s largest global children’s rights network. Our Secretariat in Geneva is a vital civil society counterpart to the United Nations (UN) human rights mechanisms in all children’s rights issues. The Secretariat coordinates its work with 80 diverse member organisations—international NGOs, regional and national networks, and organisations working on a vast variety of themes related to children’s rights.

A CHILDREN’S ADVISORY TEAM WITH 20 CHILDREN FROM 18 COUNTRIES HAS BEEN SET UP TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL STAGES OF OUR PROJECT ON CHILDREN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS.



“We want to interact effectively in our international advocacy, and we want to use the results of this advocacy to make concrete improvements in children’s rights on the ground.”

This aim inspired Child Rights Connect to develop its Network Concept, describing the vision, values and common understanding of cooperation of our global network.

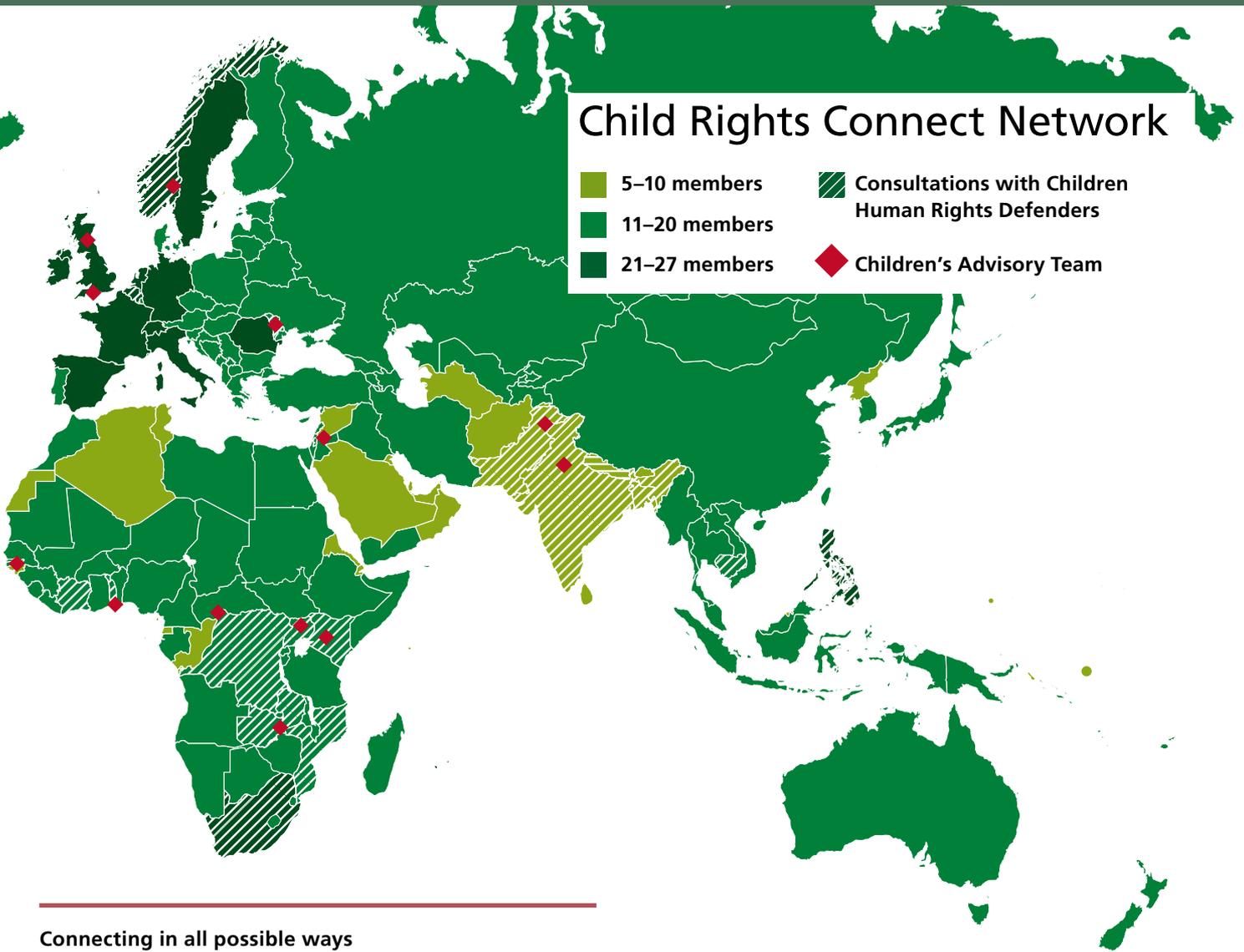
The 2017 General Assembly was dedicated to the implementation of the Network Concept. Innovative ideas were developed on children’s participation, information sharing in the network, children as human rights defenders, optimising the potential of regional networks and children’s rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A new spirit can be felt in Child Rights Connect, the network spirit, which has already born new joint initiatives.

The Secretariat in collaboration with interested members have developed a proposal for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to conduct the 2018 Day of General Discussion on the theme “Children Human Rights Defenders”. This proposal was selected by the Committee, and 15 member organisations and representatives from 34 countries are now working together in a task force to manage this ambitious global project.

Child Rights Connect Network

- 5–10 members
- 11–20 members
- 21–27 members
- Consultations with Children Human Rights Defenders
- Children’s Advisory Team



Connecting in all possible ways

In 2017, the Secretariat of Child Rights Connect conducted, for the second time, a one-day training for all members. The theme of this training was reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, including detailed information about recent developments. Also, Child Rights Connect broadened the use of webinars for working together in task forces, capacity building on UN human rights mechanisms, as well as for discussing plans, reports and other ongoing issues relevant for all members.

Opportunities for informal exchange and networking are just as important as formal ones. At the 2017 General Assembly, an evening reception brought together a panel of very inspiring speakers: Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, John Fairhurst, Head of Programmes at UBS Optimus Foundation, and Amihan Abueva, Executive Director of Child Rights Coalition Asia, debated on opportunities and challenges for children’s human rights. They led passionate discussions among the members and external guests from among Child Rights Connects’ strategic partners in Geneva.

2017 was also the birth year of our monthly informal breakfast. Breakfast Connect brings together members around coffee and croissants on the first Tuesday of the month from 9-10 am. This event has already proven to be successful in establishing important new connections and generating new ideas!

“Children too are people, children are equally human. There is nothing in the nature of age that reduces, dilutes or eliminates the same and fundamental Human Rights which we all share by nature of our birth right.”



Kate Gilmore,
United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Our theory of change

Focusing on the realisation of children's rights becomes ever more important and urgent in order to overcome injustice and create societies where everybody enjoys human rights.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most widely ratified human rights treaty that recognises children (under 18-years old) as holders of human rights and enshrines additional rights for children due to their specific vulnerabilities. Over the past almost 30 years since the Convention was adopted in 1989, much progress has been made around the world, especially in the areas of education and health. This has improved the immediate situation and prospects of many children.

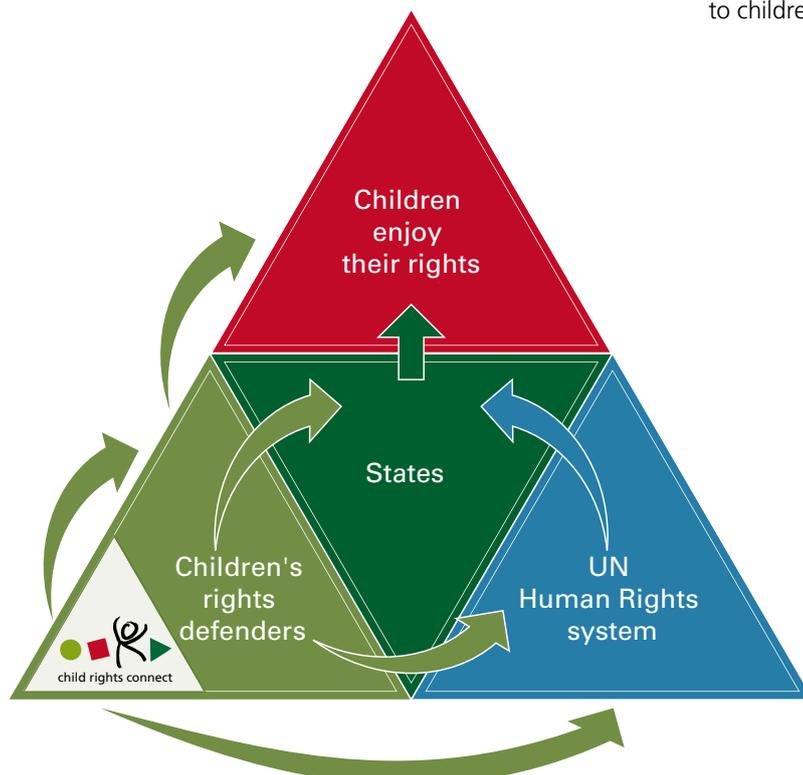
Unfortunately, many children around the world, especially the most vulnerable and excluded, still do not see their rights fully realised and many children are still considered merely objects of concern and protection, instead of rights holders and citizens. A holistic awareness, understanding and implementation of the UNCRC, its Optional Protocols and the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is the only way to ensure the fulfilment of children's rights for all children, including their civil and political rights.

Empowering children and holding states accountable are two sides of the same coin

We know that children's rights can only become a reality for every child if all States fulfil their obligations under the UNCRC to respect, promote and protect children's rights, and if children are empowered to claim and exercise their rights.

Children's rights defenders, including children, play a vital role between the UN and its Member States: As experts of the situation on the ground, children's rights defenders are best placed to explain the state of children's rights in their countries. This information helps the UN to make more relevant recommendations to governments in advancing full implementation of the UNCRC and holding them accountable to their duties and to set higher standards for children's human rights.

Children's rights defenders have a key role to empower children to know and claim their rights. They advocate for the implementation of children's rights at local, national, regional and international levels, increase States accountability to their obligations to children, and support the States in fulfilling these promises.



"Power, privilege and prosperity is old and ageing. Fear, violence and poverty has never been younger than today. (...) The silencing, exclusion and disregard of children as agents of change and as stakeholders in the world's future is an indulgence of the older populations that the world can ill afford".

Kate Gilmore,
UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Empowering Children's Rights Defenders

Child Rights Connect empowers children's rights defenders from around the world to UN human rights mechanisms for realising children's rights in their country.

Protecting and increasing civil society space for and with children

Child Rights Connect has played a significant role to ensure strong civil society space in UN human rights mechanisms, and to make it safe and meaningful for children to participate at international level.

In September 2017, children from the Philippines and Zambia participated remotely in our event organised with CIVICUS and Save the Children on civil society space for children at the UN. Through their questions they triggered a lively discussion: What can you do at international level to ensure that the views of children are heard and taken into account by adults on all levels? What can you do to make sure that more children know they have the right to be heard? How will you support children better to hold States accountable on their obligations? The issues raised during the meeting have fed into our project on children human rights defenders. The results of this event will directly influence our advocacy on civil society space at the Human Rights Council in 2018.

"We have to be well aware that children face additional challenges and barriers to civic participation than adults do, and that vulnerable children face even further obstacles. ...We need to work together to empower all girls and boys, including children with disabilities, children living in poverty, children from ethnic or linguistic minorities, and children of different ages to participate."

Beatrice Schalter,
Director of Child Rights Connect

www.facebook.com/childrightsconnect/videos



"I like that the training provided a deeper understanding of the CRC reporting process. It was also very timely for me and my coalition that is based in Asia because a number of countries in my region are due to report to the Committee in the next two years. The training helped in enhancing the regional level capacity building that my coalition organized for child rights networks a few months later." Amihan Abueva, Regional Executive Director of Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia) "

Amihan Abueva,
Regional Executive Director of Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia)

Building capacity on reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child

By participating in the reporting cycle to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, children's rights defenders can make sure the Committee is well-informed about the situation of children in their country and makes relevant recommendations to the State.

In 2017, 29 participants from 23 member organisations learned about the strategic work they can do in their country and in Geneva, during a training conducted by the Child Rights Connect Secretariat. Special focus was put on how children can participate meaningfully. The training was followed by a webinar on the follow-up to the recommendations of the Committee and other Treaty Bodies. Members and experts shared experiences and good practices about what to do on national level once the Treaty Bodies' recommendations are addressed to their governments.

<http://cocreporting.childrightsconnect.org/>

Strengthening the implementation of the Optional Protocol on a Communications Procedure

Child Rights Connect had been instrumental for the drafting and ratification campaign until the entry into force of the Optional Protocol on a Communications Procedure (OPIC), in 2014. Under OPIC, children can bring complaints about violations of their rights to the Committee. Cases under OPIC have been gradually submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, who has issued the first consideration of merits in early 2018.

In 2017 Child Rights Connect further built its capacities on OPIC and its cooperation with the OHCHR Petitions Unit, the unit that receives complaints based on the human rights treaties.

A first project towards this goal was implemented in 2017: Together with the International Commission of Jurists we provided advice and technical assistance on OPIC to migrant lawyers in EU States. We have also been instrumental for liaising with the Committee on how to use OPIC to strengthen legal practice based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We want to develop a stronger role for the implementation of OPIC and be a coordination platform to share expertise on strategic litigation: to ensure that organisations and individuals who want to bring cases to the Committee have access to relevant information and assistance.



<https://www.icj.org/strategic-litigation-retreat-for-migrant-childrens-lawyers/>

Making reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child more easily accessible

Child Rights Connect Secretariat developed an online platform, that increased the efficient submission of alternative reports to OHCHR, the Secretariat of the Committee, as well as the effective participation of children’s rights defenders, including children, in the Committee’s pre-sessions. It also allowed us to provide tailor-made support to 377 civil society representatives, both adults and children, from 38 countries to engage in the reporting cycle of the Committee in 2017. 139 delegates, including 32 children, were prepared and accompanied to physically participate in the sessions and pre-sessions of the Committee. Many more followed the public sessions by webcast. In some countries joint viewings of the sessions were organised. This allowed the organisations to hold discussions about the process of the dialogue between the State Party and the Committee, to transmit comments and additional questions to the Committee through Child Rights Connect team, and to mobilise the media to make the CRC process more visible and better known in their country.

Facilitating a smooth transition to the new CRC reporting procedure

In 2014, the UN General Assembly decided on several measures to strengthen the work of the different Treaty Bodies, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child. One of these measures is the Simplified Reporting Procedure. In 2019, the first four countries, Hungary, Croatia, Poland, and Switzerland will be reporting to the Committee following the new procedure.

Child Rights Connect has been working closely with the Committee, OHCHR and UNICEF to shape and ensure strong entry points for civil society participation in the new procedure. In 2017 we set up a Child Rights Connect Task Force with nine members to work together to support civil society participation in the reporting of the four pilot countries. The Task Force will identify successes and challenges, and compile feedback and recommendations for the Committee, to ensure that the Simplified Reporting Procedure can have the greatest impact on the ground.

“We would like to thank Child Rights Connect for the support that you gave to the Lesotho CSOs delegation that attended the 78th UN-CRC Pre-session in Geneva. The Pre-session went really well and it was a great opportunity for the Lesotho child rights CSOs to learn more about the importance of implementing the UN-CRC and reporting on its implementation.”

Lesotho Delegation

www.childrightsconnect.org/upload-session-reports/

CHILDREN ARE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS TOO !

Children who are Human Rights Defenders need recognition, protection and empowerment

Human rights defenders speak truth to power. Yet all too often, power prefers not to hear, to dismiss the truth or to outright suppress these voices.

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders states, that any person or group of persons acting to promote and protect human rights is a human rights defender. Children around the world are active in raising awareness, promoting, and protecting their rights and those of others. They get together to inform their governments at different levels about their situation, and to share ideas on how problems can be solved. Children participate in international monitoring and advocacy, especially in collaboration with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Challenges for children human rights defenders

Children human rights defenders face the same challenges and dangers, as adults. However, because they are children, they are affected in different ways and are more vulnerable to intimidations, reprisals, violence and abuse; particularly younger children, girls, children with disabilities, children from minorities and children living in poverty. Children who are or want to be human rights defenders face more obstacles within their immediate environment, the family, school or community. They must overcome prejudices of decision takers at all levels about their ability to make significant contributions, and they often face lack of respect of their views.

It is a serious problem and almost unspeakable gap, that children are not universally recognized, protected, supported or empowered as human rights defenders, neither at national nor international levels. Children human rights defenders are also invisible within the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Launching the global debate on children as human rights defenders.

In 2017, Child Rights Connect launched its global initiative to assess, discuss and strengthen the recognition, empowerment and protection of children human rights defenders at all levels.

2018 marks the 20th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child will dedicate its Day of General Discussion (DGD) on the theme "Protecting and empowering children as human rights defenders". Child Rights Connect is the Committee's main partner for the realisation of the DGD, coordinating the involvement of children and experts from all around the world, including the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders. While ensuring meaningful and safe child participation before, during and after the DGD, including through a global children's advisory team, we are working with the Committee on the development of its working methods on child participation in DGDs in order to set high standards for future DGDs.



Working with the United Nations

Child Rights Connect advocates for the UN to better promote and protect children's rights and to do more to ensure that children's voices are heard.

A child rights-based approach is key for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

All goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda are relevant for children, even where they are not explicitly mentioned. Children's rights need to be respected, protected and promoted in all areas of implementation of the SDGs.

In preparation of the 2017 Human Rights Council Annual Day on the Rights of the Child and accompanying Resolution, Child Rights Connect gathered expertise from its global network in a position paper on a child rights-based approach to the SDGs. Representatives from more than 30 Permanent Missions and NGOs participated in the discussion at our inter-sessional side-event and we succeeded in ensuring that the first Human Rights Council resolution on the rights of the child and the SDGs is grounded in a child rights-based approach.

Strengthening child participation in the UN

Three years after the adoption of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's working methods on children's participation in the CRC reporting, Child Rights Connect, the Committee, OHCHR and UNICEF met in a day retreat to take stock of successes and shortcomings and to strategize ways forward. Following an analysis of children's participation in the work of the Committee, and follow-up recommendations resulting from the retreat, the Committee's working group on children's participation reconstituted itself and resumed its work. It is a major success as advocated for by Child Rights Connect that the CRC Committee is committed to developing child participation working methods for their Days of General Discussion. The high-level child participation approach piloted by Child Rights Connect for the children human rights defenders Day of General Discussion in 2018 will feed into these working methods.

"Recognizing children as human rights defenders does not create new rights for children but reaffirms the status of children as rights holders. The DGD 2018 will provide opportunities for children to be part of the global human rights defenders' movement, realizing child participation particularly in the UN system."

Ms. Mikiko Otani,
Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child



Strengthening the effectiveness of the Treaty body system

Since children face additional challenges and vulnerabilities due to the fact that they are children, a child's rights-based perspective is important for all human rights mechanisms and bodies.

In 2017 Child Rights Connect co-founded a network of seven NGOs, all of whom play a similar role to link civil society with one of the human rights Treaty Bodies, as Child Rights Connect does in relation to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. This network is called TB-Net – the NGO group for the UN Treaty Bodies – and its mission is to support and enhance the effectiveness of the UN Treaty Bodies so that they can better contribute to the realisation of the human rights of all persons.

Since children face additional challenges and vulnerabilities due to the fact that they are children, a child's rights-based perspective is important for all UN Treaty and Charter-based Bodies.

Promoting quality, independence and diversity of Treaty Body membership

Promoting Quality, Independence and Diversity in Treaty Body Membership through Transparent and Participatory Nominations and Election Processes is a key priority of TB-Net. Indeed, "The quality, devotion and integrity of TB experts sustain the value and impact of the TB system and are prerequisites for its effectiveness" (High Commissioner for Human Rights, His Excellency Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein). In November 2017, TB-Net successfully organised the first ever event focusing on Treaty Body elections at the UN. A wide range of stakeholders including Permanent Missions, civil society and UN agency participated in the lively discussion, exchanging challenges, good practices and new ideas on how to ensure that TB members comply with the official requirements, especially expertise, gender and regional balance. Yehualashet Mekonen from the African Child Policy Forum represented Child Rights Connect on the panel. He highlighted civil society's role in identifying, encouraging and nominating qualified candidates, and airing reservations and concerns for nominees who are not suitable.

www.facebook.com/UNTBNet/videos

TB-Net

TB-Net is a network of NGOs that work in regular partnership with a UN Treaty Body and its Secretariat and that specialise in the work of that Treaty Body. Its mission is to increase the effectiveness of the UN Treaty Body system in order to ensure accountability in respect of the UN human rights treaties.

Currently, TB-Net comprises the following members: Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR Centre), Child Rights Connect, the Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GIESCR), the International Disability Alliance (IDA), The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), International Womens' Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP-Asia Pacific) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).

Sharing concerns and challenges in their activities regarding UN Treaty Bodies, TB-Net came together to advocate for increased accessibility and quality of TBs procedures and harmonization of TBs methods of work, as well as for substantive coherence among Treaty Bodies, with the view to increase well informed participation of civil society and to enhance the visibility of the UN Treaty Body system.



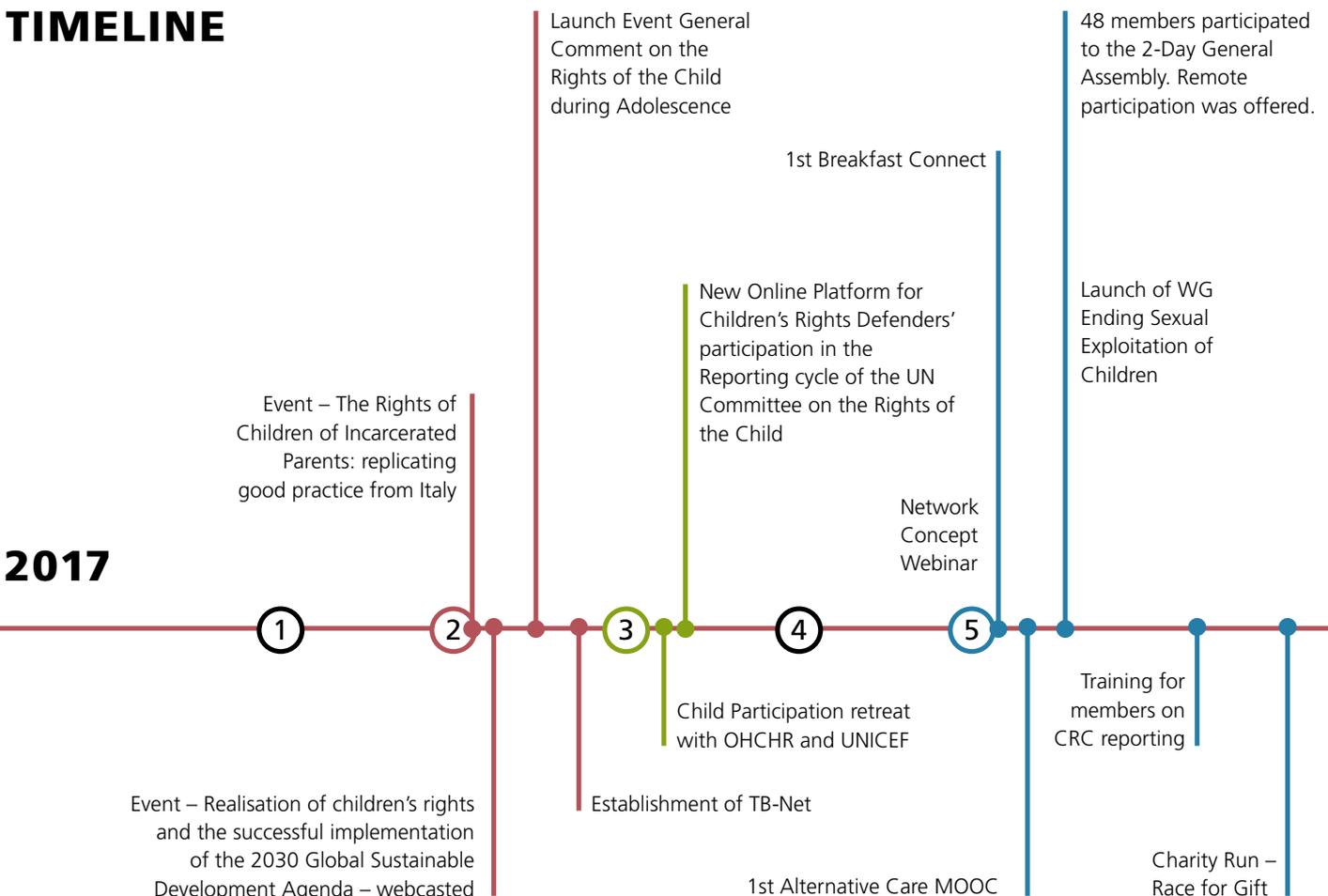
2017 IN NUMBERS

138 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS AMONG WHICH **32** CHILDREN WERE EMPOWERED TO COME TO GENEVA AND REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

24 COUNTRIES WERE REVIEWED BY THE COMMITTEE

219 REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE

TIMELINE





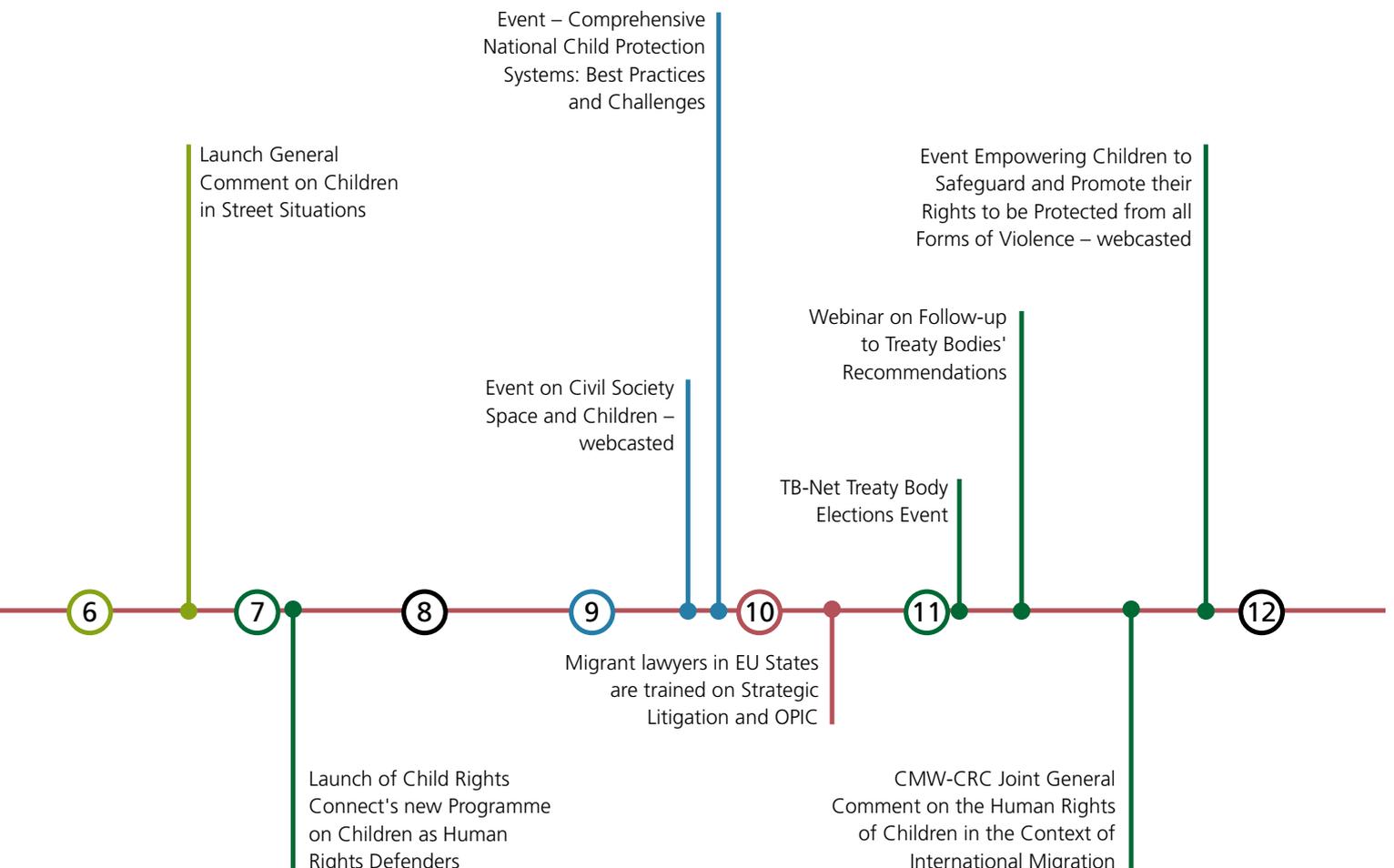
**MOOC ON
ALTERNATIVE CARE
5,186
LEARNERS FROM
136
COUNTRIES**

**8
NEW STATES
RATIFIED OPIC CRC**

**5,479
NEW SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS**

**21%
INCREASE ON TWITTER**

**35%
INCREASE ON FACEBOOK**



Joining Forces for Advocacy on Children's Rights Issues through our Working Groups

Child Rights Connect working groups amplify the discussion on their specific theme at and through the UN, and work to ensure implementation on the ground. Almost half of Child Rights Connect member organisations, 38 in 2017, are working together in six working groups.

Children and Violence

Violence against children is still a worldwide problem. According to the Global Partnership to End all Violence against Children, 1 billion children were victims of violence in 2017. To end all violence against children is one of the targets within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs).

Our Working Group promotes strategies to prevent violence against children and to protect and empower children in situations that expose them to high risk of being affected by violence.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the engagement with the Committee, the Human Rights Council and other UN human rights mechanisms are important and effective tools to prevent violence against children. Together with strong monitoring and accountability of the progress towards the 2030 SDGs, these tools will ensure that children are better protected from any form of violence.

For our event in March on the "Protection of the rights of the child in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda", we mobilised 80 participants from 49 Permanent Missions, UN Agencies and NGOs. The Working Groups established a regular dialogue with the Permanent Missions of a group of countries, who decided to focus on ending violence against children within the implementation of the SDGs. In November, we organised a round-table discussion on 'Empowering children to safeguard and promote their rights to be protected from all forms of violence'. It was a great success to generate an open dialogue, in which States shared experiences and challenges. It was acknowledged that ensuring participation of children, including those that are in challenging situations, is key to end violence against children. Children participated in both events and shared their experiences.

Convener: Arigatou International, World Vision International

Members: International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE); Defence for Children International (DCI); Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment; Plan International; Save the Children; SOS Children's Villages International; Terre des Hommes International Federation; War Child Holland; Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF); World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)

Strategic Partners: World Council of Churches

Arigatou International has been the co-convener of the Working Group on Children and Violence since 2014. Since then we have seen an increased awareness and mobilisation of the Geneva community, including permanent missions, multilateral organisations and child rights organisations, to address this issue, particularly in view of the Sustainable Development Goals. It has been very rewarding to see the articulation of advocacy through the Working Group. It has allowed us to better interact with stakeholders, bring visibility to the issue and strategize our advocacy goals here in Geneva. The Working Group not only provides a platform for knowledge exchange but is also a unique space to raise awareness and help accelerating actions.

Maria Lucia Uribe,
Director, Arigatou International



Children of Incarcerated Parents

Children of incarcerated parents are forgotten victims of imprisonment. They are often overlooked by criminal justice systems that fail to see them as rights holders.

We ensure that children of incarcerated parents are given greater prominence at the United Nations, so that the rights and welfare of these children are better promoted and protected. As only few organisations focus on this issue at international level, our Working Group established cooperation with the International Coalition for Children with Incarcerated Parents, to join forces and expertise. Thanks to our advocacy, children who are detained with their parents will be considered as a priority in the Global Study on Children Deprived of their Liberty.

In 2017 the Working Group had a great success to bring a good practice from one country to another: In Italy, a civil society organisation specialised on children of incarcerated parents, the Ombudsman for Childhood and Adolescence and the Ministry of Justice worked together to ensure that the rights of children of incarcerated parents are protected: specifically the right to an emotional bond with their imprisoned parent, and for parents, the right to exercise their parental role in the best interest of the child. This good practice was presented by our member NNAPes in many countries in Latin America, and was taken up in Argentina. The practice was also presented at our event at the UN in February, which was co-sponsored by the Italian Mission and well attended by diplomats from many countries, with the aim to replicate it further.

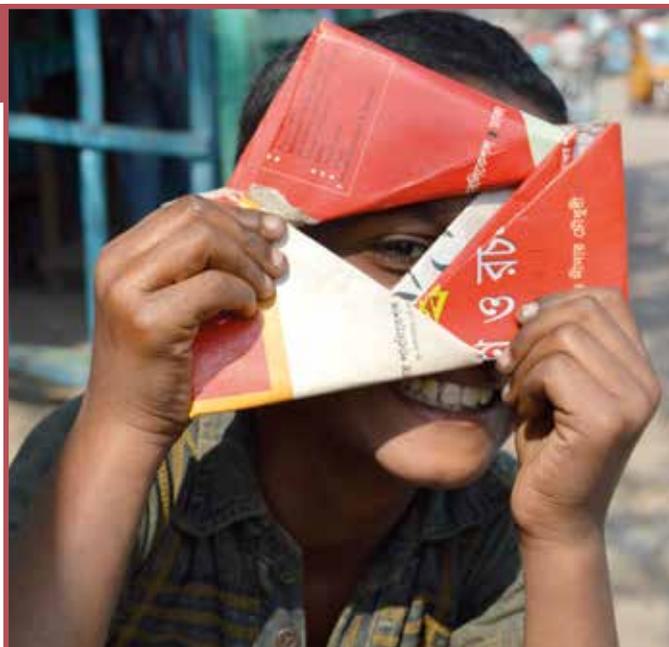


The Rights of Children of Incarcerated Parents: replicating good practice from Italy

Convener: Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) represented by the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva

Members: COPE; NNAPes; International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE); Defence for Children International (DCI); Relais Enfants Parents (REPR)

Observers: Action for Child Rights International; Penal Reform International, International Coalition for Children with Incarcerated Parents



Investment in Children

As a prerequisite to fulfil all other rights, investing in children is investing in the present. It is also an investment in the future, as child-rights based budgeting counters inequalities and ensures that all children can develop their full potential.

Our Working Group continues to be at the forefront of advocating for investment in children at the United Nations and bringing it to reality on country level. After the adoption and the launch of the General Comment No. 19 - an interpretation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Committee on budgeting for children – in 2016, the work to make it widely known started. In 2017 we met with the Committee on the Rights of the Child and presented the results from 29 global, regional and national launches. At this occasion the Chair of the Committee thanked us for the substantive contributions to the General Comment and mentioned that the methodology for consultations with children has set new standards for the Committee.

During the annual “Investing in Children” Conference that took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, General Comment No. 19 was widely discussed. Governments from all Latin American countries were represented at the highest level and presented their progress in measuring investment and how it improves the lives of children.

Conveners: Eurochild, REDLAMYC

Members: African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia), Defence for Children International Costa Rica (DCI Costa Rica), International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN-GIFA), Plan International, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes International Federation, World Vision International

Strategic Partners: UNICEF

Children Without Appropriate Parental Care

Millions of children are in, or in need of, out-of-home care. They live with relatives, in foster care, in residential facilities, in child-headed households or on the street. They reside in their own countries or are displaced internationally. Sometimes, care is provided under conditions that violate their rights: they face abuse, lack of efforts towards family reunification, or are deprived of liberty.

Our Working Group improves the situation of these children worldwide. The Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children are a key instrument for making this possible.

After the very successful Alternative Care Conference organised by the Working Group at the end of 2016, we disseminated the results and learning through our Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on Alternative Care, in which 5,186 learners from 136 countries participated. The Working Group developed a tracking tool to help countries monitor their progress against the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, which was launched at the IFCO World Conference in November 2017. Countries can use this tool when reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The tool can be found here: www.trackingprogressinitiative.org

Conveners: Hope and Homes for Children, Save the Children

Members: International Movement ATD Fourth World, Family for Every Child, International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO), International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), International Social Service (ISS), Plan International, Friends World Committee for Consultation represented by Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva, RELAF, and SOS Children’s Villages International.

Observers: The Better Care Network & CELCIS

Strategic Partners: Oak Foundation, UNICEF

Children and Armed Conflict

Millions of children caught up in armed conflicts witness atrocities and may even become targets. They lose parents and loved ones or are forced to flee, making them vulnerable to more rights violations including violence, sexual abuse, trafficking, and denial of humanitarian support.

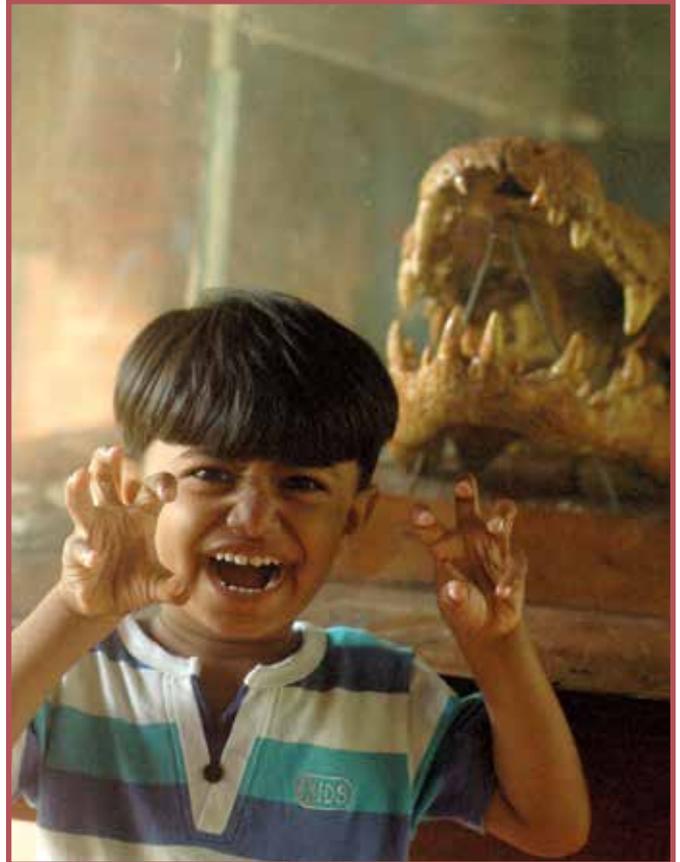
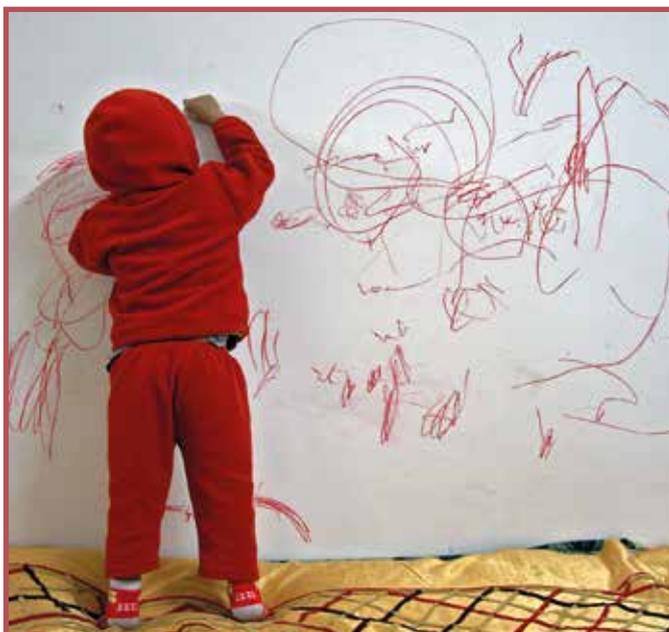
Our Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict advocates for protecting the rights of children affected by conflict, and ensures that the Human Rights Council and the Committee on the Rights of the Child are better equipped and informed on this issue.

2017 saw a change of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Children and Armed Conflict. Ms. Virginia Gamba, the new SRSG, further developed the mandate, focusing on humanitarian access and stronger collaboration with civil society. Our Working Group took this opportunity to strengthen the relationship with the SRSG.

Conveners: War Child Holland; Defence for Children International (since December 2017), Arigatou International (until November 2017)

Members: Child Rights International Network (CRIN); Child Soldiers International; ECPAT International; Humanium; Plan Sweden; Save the Children; Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF)

Observers: Geneva Call; Watchlist; Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack



Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children

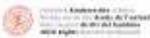
An unmeasurable problem is impossible to solve. It is one of the challenges in ending the sexual exploitation of children that no precise statistics are available. Unfortunately, evidence shows that children face increasing risks of sexual exploitation due to technological developments. Crime is outpacing law enforcement and child protection measures in all parts of the world.

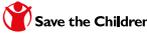
In order to end sexual exploitation of children and to give a voice to the victims, our Working Group was officially established in May 2017, during the General Assembly of Child Rights Connect. We aim to mobilise strategic partnerships with States, the UN, law enforcement agencies, civil society, the private sector and children themselves —particularly those who have been directly affected by sexual exploitation. We want to collectively define the way forward for ending all sexual exploitation of children.

Conveners: ECPAT International, Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)

Members: International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE); War Child Holland; Terre des Hommes International Federation; Centre of Excellence in Alternative Care

Child Rights Connect Members

	Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa (ACYA), New Zealand		Child Rights Network Switzerland, Switzerland		Elizabeth Fry Society of Greater Vancouver, Canada
	African Child Policy Forum, Ethiopia		Child Soldiers International, United Kingdom		Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, USA
	Alliance for Children Mauritius, Mauritius		ChildFund Alliance, USA		End Child Prostitution Child Pornography and Trafficking (ECPAT International), Thailand
	Anti-Slavery International, United Kingdom		Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE), France		Eurochild, Belgium
	Arigatou International, Switzerland		Children's Parliament, Scotland, United Kingdom		European Association for Children in Hospital (EACH), Switzerland
	Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW), United Kingdom		Children's Rights Alliance, Ireland		Family for Every Child, United Kingdom
	Association for Childhood Education International, USA		Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE), United Kingdom		Fédération Internationale des Communautés Educatives (FICE), Austria
	Baha'i International Community, USA		Conseil Français des Associations pour les Droits de l'Enfant (COFRADE), France		Franciscans International, Switzerland
	Casa Alianza Suisse, Switzerland		Consortium for Street Children (CSC), United Kingdom		Friends International Suisse, Switzerland
	Centre of Excellence in Alternative Care of Children, India		Defence for Children International (DCI), Switzerland		Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) (QUNO), Switzerland
	Child Helpline International, Netherlands		Defence for Children International Costa Rica (DCI), Costa Rica		Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children c/o APPROACH Ltd., United Kingdom
	Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRCA), Philippines		Edmund Rice International, Switzerland		Hope and Homes for Children, United Kingdom
	Child Rights International Network (CRIN), United Kingdom		Egyptian Foundation for Advancement of Childhood Conditions (EFACC), Egypt		Human Rights Watch, USA

	Humanium, Switzerland		Internet Watch Foundation, United Kingdom		Save the Children International, Switzerland
	INGO "Ponimanie", Belarus		Make Mothers Matter, France		SOS Children's Villages International, Switzerland / Austria
	International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates (IAYFJM/AIMJF), Switzerland		Marista Solidarity International Foundation (FMSI), Switzerland		Tanzania Child Rights Forum, Tanzania
	International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN/GIFA), Switzerland		National Coalition Germany, Germany		Terre des Hommes International Federation, Switzerland
	International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE), Switzerland		Ninas, Ninos, Adolescentes con Padres Encarcelados (NNAPES), Uruguay		The Rights of the Child NGO (ROC), Russia
	International Child Rights Center (InCRC), Korea		Our Children Opatija, Croatia		Together Scotland, United Kingdom
	International Council of Women (ICW/CIF), France		Plan International, United Kingdom		WAO Afrique, Togo
	International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), Switzerland		Plataforma de Organizaciones de Infancia, Spain		War Child Holland, Netherlands
	International Foster Care Organization, Ireland (IFCO), Ireland		Proyecto Solidario, Spain		Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF), Switzerland
	International Inner Wheel, United Kingdom		Red Latinoamericana de Acogimiento (RELAF), Argentina		World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), United Kingdom
	International Juvenile Justice Observatory, Belgium		Red Latinoamericana y caribena por la defensa de los derechos de los ninos, ninas, y adolescents (REDLAMYC), Mexico		World Organisation Against Torture/SOS Torture (OMCT), Switzerland
	International Movement "ATD Fourth World", France		Relais Enfants Parents Romands (REPR), Switzerland		World Vision International, USA
	International Play Association, United Kingdom		Roshni Homes Trust, Pakistan		Young Men's Christian Association of Costa Rica, Costa Rica
	International Social Service (ISS), Switzerland		Rural Women Development Initiative (RUWODI), Tanzania		

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Delia Pop

Hope and Homes for Children
President

Eylah Kadjar-Hamouda

Terre des Hommes
Vice President

Annette Lyth

Plan International
Secretary

Alan Kikuchi-White

SOS Children's Villages International
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Conchi Ballesteros

Plataforma de Organizaciones de Infancia

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Child to Child

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David McAdam
Communications Officer

Our Donors and Supporters

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our donors, partners and supporters. Your contributions enable us to support children's rights defenders around the globe to engage with each other and the UN human rights system, and to achieve important steps towards a universal realisation of children's rights.



Canton of Geneva



Sida (Swedish International Development Agency)



Oak Foundation



Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

Plan International
Plan International Sweden

Save the Children Sweden



SOS Children's Villages International

Our Race for Gift runners and supporters:

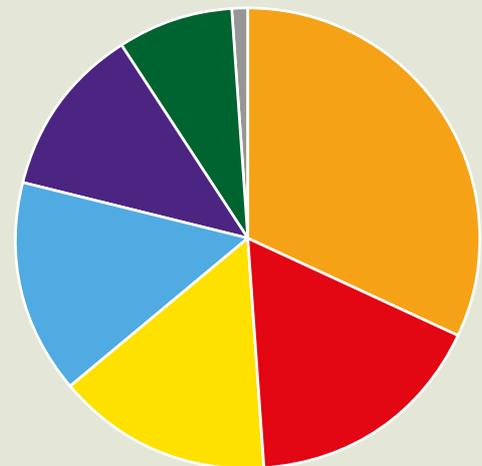
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Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2017

ASSETS	2017 CHF	2016 CHF
Liquidities	236'965	161'705
Prepaid	36'874	44'534
Current assets	273'840	206'239
Cash deposit Visa Card	5'001	5'001
Financial assets	5'001	5'001
Computers	2'853	0
Tangibles assets	2'853	0
Fixed assets	7'854	5'001
Total assets	281'694	211'240
LIABILITIES		
Project balance carried forward	131'711	70'087
Payables	12'160	2'870
Accruals	11'404	16'281
Current liabilities	155'276	89'238
Non-current liabilities	0	0
Free capital	84'873	150'576
Restricted capital	37'130	37'130
Profit / (Loss) of the year	4'416	-65'704
Capital of the organisation	126'419	122'003
Total liabilities	281'694	211'240

Income 2017



■ SIDA	32 %
■ Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	17 %
■ Switzerland	15 %
■ Oak Foundation	15 %
■ Grants from Members	12 %
■ Membership Fee	8 %
■ Other	1 %



Income

	2017 CHF	2016 CHF
Membership fees	60'867	65'368
Grants/donations from members	81'399	78'781
Grants/donations from governments	456'411	438'639
Grants/donations from foundations	111'065	225'965
Other income	7'383	20'072
Total income	717'124	828'824



Operating Expenses 2017 by Cost Centres

	2017 CHF	2016 CHF
Overhead	184'010	252'428
Personnel Costs	93'115	137'819
Office costs	51'666	72'383
Professional Services	39'229	35'630
Staff training	0	5'766
Team development	0	830
Communication and Networking	125'667	92'240
Communication and Networking implementation costs	105'960	83'320
Communications Administration Costs	1'247	1'925
Publications and website development	9'640	4'029
Networking	8'820	2'966
Network Management	73'467	90'273
Network implementation costs	60'115	74'541
General Assembly	11'996	12'926
Executive Committee	1'356	1'736
Working Groups	0	1'070
Programmes	330'870	464'777
Programme implementation costs	299'277	400'402
Programme Development	934	7'362
Capacity building	1'087	3'025
Technical assistance	25'538	51'823
Advocacy	4'034	2'165
Total Costs	714'015	899'718



Our audited financial report is available upon request.

Your support

Child Rights Connect needs your support for its advocacy at the United Nations – a small investment that sets the ground for a good life of every child. Child Rights Connect links international, regional and national actors, so that the change achieved at international level emanates around the globe and helps make human rights a reality for every child.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT CHILD RIGHTS CONNECT CONTINUES TO BUILD THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE CHANGE FOR ALL CHILDREN

What impact do your donations have?	
100 CHF:	Allows for the remote coaching of a child to prepare the reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
500 CHF:	Allows for a one-day technical assistance to a children's rights defender by expert staff.
1500 CHF:	Allows for a children's rights defender representative to travel to Geneva to participate in the pre-session of the Committee ensuring the voices of children on the ground are heard and integrated into recommendations made to States.
5'000 CHF:	Allows for the training of 30 Child Rights Connect members during a one-day workshop on how to, for example, strengthen the impact of UN human rights mechanisms.
20'000 CHF:	Allows us to publish a child friendly publication showcasing personal stories and good practices of children who are human rights defenders.

Please make your donation to:

Child Rights Connect

UBS SA Vermont – Nations
17 Chemin Louis Dunant
1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland

For Swiss Francs and other currencies

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What's on in 2018?

-  Child Rights Connect is working with child advisors from all regions of the world on our project on Children Human Rights Defenders.
-  The Secretariat of Child Rights Connect will work together with 15 member organisations and representatives from 34 countries to make the 2018 Day of General Discussion a big succes!
-  Child Rights Connect is launching its new website including an online platform for interaction among members.

Child Rights Connect

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