

Terms of Reference for Supporting Organisations for child advisors of the Child Rights Connect Children's Advisory Team!

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★ Aims of a supporting organisation

Each child wishing to be a child advisor is encouraged to apply alongside a supporting organisation.¹ The supporting organisations play a crucial role in acting as the local and national representative and main focal point for the child advisor and key contact for Child Rights Connect in the organisation and smooth-running of the Children's Advisory Team.

The main aims of the supporting organisation include to ensure guidance throughout the child advisor mandate, including helping and supporting the various activities involved, making sure the child is regularly updated and connected with the Team / Child Rights Connect, and keeping the child advisor safe. Further details are listed in the responsibilities and roles below.

★ Who can be a supporting organisation?

A supporting organisation can be:

- A member or a partner of Child Rights Connect. A partner of Child Rights Connect includes those organisations connected to the networks and partnerships of Child Rights Connect Secretariat and our members.
- A child-led organisation or child-led initiative which is supported by adults.
- A child-led group without the support of adults which is not a registered organisation could also become a supporting organisation. This will be relevant where children have been mobilising and organising with very little or no support from adults. In this case, Child Rights Connect would seek to identify an additional supporting organisation to take on specific tasks, such as child safeguarding measures.²

¹ Since more and more children are mobilising as human rights defenders without the support of adults, a child will still be able to apply without a supporting organisation and ask for the support of Child Rights Connect to try to identify one.

² This is to be developed and confirmed by the supporting organisations on a case-by-case basis depending on the capacities of the applicant supporting organisation and prioritising child safeguarding measures.

To ensure consistency as well as trust and security for the child advisor, as well as ongoing and regular connection with Child Rights Connect, where the supporting organisation is a member or partner, we anticipate that one member of staff would be chosen as the supporting organisation focal person. They would then be responsible for the main responsibilities and tasks of the role. It is likely that other members of your Team may be involved in specific activities or elements of the different tasks (such as if your organisation has a child safeguarding focal person) and that if the focal person changes, we collectively support this process to ensure the child advisor is aware and supported during any transition periods.

It is possible that a supporting organisation could cover this role for more than one child advisor.

★ **Benefits of being a supporting organisation**

Benefits of the supporting organisations include:

- Capacity-building and technical assistance on child safeguarding and children's empowerment and the opportunity to strengthen the processes and results of your child participation activities;
- Developing stronger connections with Child Rights Connect and its members and partners globally and utilising this initiative to reach out to and mobilise other national stakeholders;
- Access to various UN advocacy activities and receiving information on developments and initiatives related to children's rights at UN level;
- Being part of a unique activity to put children at the centre of child rights implementation;
- Giving your organisation visibility at the international level.

A previous supporting organisation, CRIC Moldova, reported that fulfilling this role was an excellent opportunity to both increase the effectiveness of their organisation by strengthening the application of a child rights-based approach and applying rights-based consultation methodologies and tools. CRIC also linked their role as supporting organisation to positive results at the local/national level related to children's participation rights.

★ **Responsibilities of a supporting organisation**

The key responsibilities of a supporting organisation to a child advisor are:

- To be the main focal point to Child Rights Connect for the child advisor and maintaining regular contact throughout the mandate.
- To take a child safeguarding lead for the child advisor by applying the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (read [here](#)) at all times. This includes being the main focal point for Child Rights Connect in communicating on the safety of the child advisor.
- To ensure that the child advisor has received the necessary information and updates from Child Rights Connect in relation to the activities and tasks of the Children's Advisory Team and remains well-connected.
- To give guidance and support to the child advisor in carrying out their role (see more in the list of tasks of supporting organisations below).
- If needed, providing translation and interpretation support (for all documents, feedback and implementation of activities and online meetings).

★ **Main tasks of a supporting organisation**

- Support and guide the child advisor in their various activities on the Children's Advisory Team. Depending on the capacity of the child, this includes discussing together the activity, helping to

facilitate the different tasks involved (such as supporting a focus group with the child's peers, supporting the child advisors to feedback to their peers and broader children and youth structures/networks at national level on the Children's Advisory Team activities, or facilitating them to give their comments to the creation of a child-friendly document).

- Helping to ensure the child advisor has regular connection to Basecamp (the online platform where we will keep in contact with everyone; child advisors and supporting organisations) and Zoom calls (the platform we will use to arrange online calls with the child advisors) including helping to use these platforms. In the case where the child advisor may not have access to the internet, the supporting organisation will need to play an active role in transmitting all information and updates to the child.
- Providing regular updates to Child Rights Connect such as alerting them when there may be a reason as to why the child advisor is unable to commit their time (such as school exams or an illness) or helping to assist with visa applications and travel arrangements if/when the child advisor may be travelling to Geneva or possibly elsewhere as part of their role.

★ **Expected time and resources commitment**

We expect that the time required by a supporting organisation to fulfil this role will be approximately 4 hours per month. This will be variable depending on the capacity, the independence and the proactiveness of the child advisor, since some child advisors (such as younger children, children needing IT support or translation/interpretation support) will require more assistance in their role.

You can expect less time commitments during quieter weeks over Christmas and summer and some months where there will be more time required such as when there is a deadline for an activity of the Team.

Financial implications involve the time of organisational staff to fulfil the role. There is no expectation for supporting organisations to fund the travel and other related expenses of child advisors to attend meetings in Geneva or possibly elsewhere (which is currently on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic)

There may be small costs relating to travel of the supporting organisation to meet a child advisor in-person to discuss/carry out their activities, as well as when facilitating possible focus groups with the child advisors' peers (such as securing a space and providing some basic resources) (which again, depending on the country context, is not possible for the foreseeable future due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

It is expected that supporting organisations would be proactive in supporting fundraising for the activities and overall effectiveness of the Children's Advisory Team.

★ **Child safeguarding**

The safeguarding of a child advisor (and any children engaging with the child advisor as part of the Children's Advisory Team activities at local and national level) is a key responsibility of a supporting organisation. The supporting organisation must sign and apply the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (read [here](#)) at all times. All adults involved in any way in the activities of the Children's Advisory Team are under the scope of this policy and procedure (see the document for more details).

All supporting organisations will receive a training on child safeguarding at the beginning of the child advisor mandate and there will be regular updates and updated trainings if there are new focal points within the supporting organisations. They will be asked to sign a consent form to comply with the Policy and Procedure (link above) as well as to share with Child Rights Connect their organisational safeguarding policy and procedure.

Child Rights Connect is committed to be a child safe organisation and this applies to the Children's Advisory Team and all its related persons and activities.

★ **Communication flows**

Child Rights Connect will maintain regular contact with the supporting organisations primarily via email and online Zoom calls. We will also expect supporting organisations to regularly monitor the Basecamp platform of the child advisors. The supporting organisations will often be communicated to as a group and it is encouraged for the organisations to exchange and share experiences as well as support one another throughout the mandate.

★ **How to apply as a supporting organisation**

A supporting organisation will be required to submit a joint application with a child advisor using an online survey, which will be circulated broadly. The survey will ask the supporting organisation for key information about the organisation including contact details, an organisational child safeguarding policy and procedure and your organisational structure and budget.

Where a child advisor has not applied alongside a supporting organisation, or has applied alongside a child-led group without the support of adults, they will be able to request for Child Rights Connect's support in trying to identify a possible supporting organisation.