

Children's Global Consultation on Sustainable Development and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Activity Pack: Sheet for supporting organisations and facilitators to organise preparatory meetings with children

This document is intended for organisations that wish to support children in their participation in the **Children's Global Consultation on Sustainable Development and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to take place online on 5th and 6th April 2022**. For more information, see the [Concept Note](#).

- **What is this opportunity about?**

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) is developing a General Comment on Sustainable Development and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

This is the first time that the CESCR will involve children in the elaboration of a General Comment. The objective of the Committee is to gather children's views at an early stage to ensure that the first draft of the General Comment reflects children's views and their understanding of how their rights are affected by the issues that the Committee is looking at. Other opportunities will be provided for children to engage throughout the process to ensure a sustainable engagement.

This document and the accompanying power point provide guidance to run a preparatory meeting with children that wish to participate in the consultations organised by the Committee in April.

These materials will help ensure an empowering, sustainable, and safe participation of children during the consultation process. In order to participate in the meetings with the CESCR, children must take part in a preparatory meeting.

- **Age range and group size**

Based on the language used in the information materials, we suggest this consultation is appropriate for children aged around 12 years and up (until the age of 17 years - as per the definition of a child in the Convention on the Rights of the Child). Younger children are welcome to participate with appropriate support from adults to make sure they can participate fully in the consultation process. For the preparatory meeting, we suggest a group size of around 5-7 children to allow interaction and time for each child to participate. If more children are interested, we recommend a plan to break into smaller groups or repeat the consultation.

- **Child safeguarding and informed consent**

All members and partners who will hold meetings with children are expected to adhere to [Child Rights Connect's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure](#). If you have any questions about child safeguarding, you can email Emma at grindulis@childrightsconnect.org.

It is important to review and take forward the Committee on the Rights of the Child's 9 basic requirements for child participation – here is a [link](#) to the basic requirements and there is a child-friendly version below:

1. Children must be able to **access all information** about the consultation and about their right to be listened to and for their views to be acted on.
2. **It is children's choice to participate, and they can decide not to take part at any point.**

3. Children's views and ideas should be **respected** by adults.
 4. The activities will be **interesting and familiar** to the child's life, and there will be space for child participants to put forward any issues that are important to them.
 5. There should be preparations for the consultations so that all children will feel happy to participate in the activities, within **comfortable and friendly spaces**.
 6. The activities should be **open equally to all children** to take part from all communities and backgrounds, including children with disabilities.
 7. **Adults will be prepared** for the different activities so that all children are comfortable and feel supported and listened to.
 8. **Children must be safe and know who to talk to if they feel unsafe.**
 9. Children should get **feedback** on how their views have been acted on by adults, and the chance to give their opinion on the results of this project and its activities.
- ✓ Consistent with the 2nd basic requirement, it is important to receive **informed consent** from children for their participation in the preparatory meeting. It is necessary to share information with the children about what is happening and why, how they can take part and how their views will be taken into account, and what kind of follow-up and feedback there will be. In this [document to help support child consultations to develop child-friendly versions of the UNCRC](#), you can find example consent forms which may be helpful.
 - ✓ Consistent with the 4th basic requirement, the activity should be relevant and interesting for the child participants. Please note that **it is not essential that child participants have prior experience of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Sustainable Development (ICESCR)**.
 - ✓ Consistent with the 6th basic requirement, it is very important that the selection of child participants is **inclusive and diverse**, including a gender and age balance, children from different backgrounds and situations and children with disabilities. Please bear in mind that the recommended age of participation for this consultation is for children from 12 to 17 years of age as specified above.
- **Running a preparatory meeting**

The format and time for the preparatory meeting will depend on the group you are working with in terms of communication level, style and timings, and accessibility.

Use our handy [Powerpoint Presentation](#) to take forward the exchange– feel free to develop / adapt to suit your context and planning!

1. **Ice-breaker:** Start with an ice-breaker. This helpful [toolkit](#) can give you some ideas!
2. **Keeping everyone safe:** Review and take forward the Committee on the Rights of the Child's [9 basic requirements for child participation](#) and make sure there is informed consent from all participants.
3. **Explain what the opportunity is about.**

4. **Learn about the ICESCR; the CDESCR; economic, social and cultural rights; and sustainable development:** with the support of the power point, learn about some key concepts for the consultation, including what the ICESCR is; what the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights is and what it does; and what sustainable development is. At this point, you can use this [child-friendly version of the ICESCR](#) to have a discussion about the ICESCR and learn about the rights it includes. Children could pick different rights and see if/how they relate to theirs/their peers' everyday lives.
5. **Present and conduct the activity:** using the Power Point and the Concept Note for the Children's Global Consultation, provide information on the consultation that the CDESCR is organizing and on the 3 topics that will be discussed. Ask the children to choose one or more topics to think about and invite them to exchange their ideas on the selected topics. (You can use tools for visual support, such as stickers for in-person meetings or a [Jamboard](#) for online meetings). Support the children in keeping a record of the exchange so they can present the views of the group to the CDESCR during the consultations.
6. **Next steps:** round-up the workshop by explaining how the views shared during the meeting can be used by the group during the online meetings with the CDESCR. Support the group in identifying 1 to 3 children to represent the group in the discussions with the CDESCR (if there is a lot of interest from children to participate in the meetings with the CDESCR, the organizers will ask to reduce the number to 1 to 2 children representatives).

Send feedback and any questions to Child Rights Connect (Leire Ibáñez – she/her – at ibanez@childrightsconnect.org and Ana Carla Carlos – she/her – at hrc.programmes@childrightsconnect.org).