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CASE STUDY 1

Cambodia Consultative Workshop and Action Plan

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child (NGOCRC)

ABSTRACT:

A workshop was conducted to present and discuss the concluding observations. Consultations with government agencies, NGOs and children were held in order to develop an action plan to follow-up on the concluding observations.

OBJECTIVE:

To develop an action plan and follow-up strategies with government ministries, national and international NGOs, members of the National Assembly and Senate, UN agencies and children to respond to the concluding observations.

TIMELINE:

2011 – On-going

PROCESS:

PHASE 1 – CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP

Goal: To disseminate the concluding observations.

- Translate informally the concluding observations into the main national language.
- Conduct a national workshop to present the concluding observations to all government ministries/institutions at national and provincial level, national and international NGOs, members of the National Assembly and Senate, UN agencies and children.
- Split participants into working groups led by representatives of various stakeholders.
- Divide the recommendations amongst the working groups to discuss follow-up.
- Prepare a report at the end of the meeting to sum up commitments.

→ **TIP:** Focus on the most important recommendations to ensure the most effective follow-up process possible.

PHASE 2 – ACTION PLAN

Goal: To develop an action plan to implement recommendations made in the concluding observations.

- Conduct consultations with government agencies, civil society organisations and children to develop an action plan and strategies to respond to the concluding observations.

- Determine who will follow-up on which recommendations.
- Distribute the action plan amongst all relevant stakeholders.
- Lobby stakeholders to implement the action plan.

→ **TIP:** If NGOs in your country do not have a strong relationship with the government, try to at least work together with the ministries responsible for monitoring the CRC.

PHASE 3 – FOLLOW-UP WORKSHOP

Goal: To discuss specific strategies and develop specific action plans for NGOs and child and youth-led groups to monitor the concluding observations.

- Hold a consultative workshop with NGOs, children and youth.
- Present the concluding observations to participants.
- Divide into sub-groups to discuss the various clusters of the CRC.
- Discuss and prioritise the concluding observations within each sub-group.
- Prepare a work plan that sets out time-bound monitoring strategies and identifies a responsible organisation.

→ **TIP:** Integrate the action plan into your organisation's strategic plan.

OUTCOME:

An action plan developed by members of government ministries/institutions at national and provincial level, national and international NGOs, members of the National Assembly and Senate, UN agencies and children.

IMPACT:

Increased awareness of the concluding observations amongst government ministries/institutions at national and provincial level, national and international NGOs, members of the National Assembly and Senate, UN agencies and children and youth.

CHALLENGES:

HUMAN RESOURCES

Limited human resources and lack of capacity make it challenging to put the action plan into effect. The NGO CRC tried to establish an advocacy unit within the Secretariat to mobilise NGOs and the government to monitor the Committee's recommendations, but was not able to do so. Time constraints and a lack of financial support are also challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

COMPARE WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

Compare the strategic plan of the coalition with the action plan and see where there is overlap. Use the action plan in the development of future strategic plans.

ADVOCATE AND LOBBY

The ultimate goal of the action plan is to integrate the Committee's recommendations in national laws and policies.

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CASE STUDY 2

England Annual Review State of Children's Rights in England

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee (the Committee) on the Rights of the Child and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE)

ABSTRACT:

CRAE produces an annual review that summarises key developments (both positive and negative) in law and policy in children's rights in England. The reviews follow comprehensive submissions to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2002 and 2008, which were supported by over 100 NGOs, including all the major children's charities.

OBJECTIVE:

To conduct a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the children's rights situation in England which aims to promote the legal status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the authority of the Committee within government, Parliament, the NGO sector and wider society and to put pressure on the government to act on the Committee's recommendations.

TIMELINE:

2003 – On-going

PROCESS:

PUBLICATION OF CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Goal: To convert concluding observations from the Committee on the Rights of the Child into a workable advocacy tool.

- Analyse each section of the Committee's concluding observations to identify clear recommendations.
- Bring together these recommendations into a single document, making them as concise as possible and numbering them under each cluster.
- Widely disseminate the recommendations made by the Committee, comparing this with the number of recommendations from the previous examination.

PHASE 1 – PLANNING

Goal: To organise the preparation of the annual review.

- Divide the sections of the annual review amongst Secretariat members according to their expertise and availability.
- Identify gaps in published data and evidence required to make assessments of progress or deterioration.

- Organise a children's rights symposium to bring together member organisations, the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (Britain's accredited National Human Rights Institution) to obtain documentation, research, expert analysis, anecdotes and examples of best practices.

→ **TIP:** Have experts make very short presentations on each cluster and then organise debates after each presentation.

PHASE 2 – CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Goal: To gather information and evidence.

- Request member organisations to submit written information, ideally within the numbered recommendations and summarised.
- Submit freedom of information requests to every government department that published a parliamentary bill in the past year (to assess the extent to which the CRC has informed and shaped legislative proposals).
- Submit freedom of information requests to government departments and other public authorities to obtain information not in the public domain (particularly important in areas where breaches of children's rights are known or strongly suspected).
- Draft parliamentary questions (PQs) to obtain information not in the public domain (particularly important in areas where breaches of children's rights are known or strongly suspected).

→ **TIP:** Don't forget to look for relevant research and consultation documents that provide the perspective or testimony of children. Working with parliamentarians on PQs is a very good way of engaging them in the monitoring process.

PHASE 3 – DRAFT ANNUAL REVIEW

Goal: To prepare a high quality annual review.

- Analyse official data and information received through freedom of information requests, parliamentary questions and NGOs.
- Contact NGOs and policy experts directly to draft sections of review or check for accuracy of sections that have been written by Secretariat staff.
- Liaise with member organisations that have a significant interest and engagement in particular children's rights policy areas, to discuss key messages and tone of review and accompanying press release.
- Encourage government and civil servants by welcoming significant positive developments.

→ **TIP:** It is important that the research is rigorous and the review is of high quality in order to avoid complaints of bias or for the work to be dismissed (by either government or NGO community). Maintaining independence is crucial.

PHASE 4 – LAUNCH

Goal: To publicly launch the annual review to the media.

- Circulate engaging press release ahead of the launch, with embargoed review. Use numbers and statistics, e.g. '80% of UN's recommendations concerning most vulnerable children not met'.
- Distribute review both in hard copy and electronically.
- Organise a press conference or other high profile event to introduce the review to the public.
- Provide a copy of the review to government ministers, civil servants, parliamentarians, statutory bodies and member organisations.
- Meet with parliamentarians and NGOs, including children and young people, to discuss the review.

→ **TIP:** In order to attract the attention of the media, highlight information that is not already in the public domain so that the “story” is different each year.

PHASE 5 – CONTRIBUTE TO OTHER MONITORING PROCESSES

Goal: To raise awareness of children’s rights with other human rights bodies

- Look for opportunities to raise awareness at an international and regional level.
- Submit relevant information from the annual review to other international and regional human rights bodies such as the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women or the UN Committee Against Torture.

OUTCOME:

The compilation and presentation of an annual review that shows positive as well as negative developments in children’s human rights in England.

IMPACT:

The annual review provides an evidence base in children’s rights for CRAE and its member organisations and has helped to integrate the Committee’s recommendations into the work of CRAE’s members. Positive developments (in terms of policies and commitments) may never have happened if not for the annual review as it puts pressure on the government to act on the Committee’s recommendations.

CHALLENGES:

HIGHER PROFILE

More could be done to promote and disseminate the annual review. Having a press officer would help to ensure that different audiences are targeted appropriately and expectations are managed. The review could be disseminated to institutions, such as academics, research institutions and think tanks, which might value the information. The use of social media to raise debate and expectations about implementation of the Convention also has huge potential.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

ADVOCATE AND LOBBY

Use of the findings from the annual review to systematically advocate for compliance with international law, the realisation of children’s rights and the improvement of the situation of children in the country.

CHILD-FRIENDLY VERSION OF THE ANNUAL REVIEW

If possible, release a child-friendly version or a child-friendly summary of the annual review.

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CASE STUDY 3

Azerbaijan Follow-up activities on the Concluding Observations

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

Azerbaijan NGO Alliance for Children's Rights

ABSTRACT:

The NGO Alliance organises workshops, seminars and roundtables, amongst other activities, in order to follow-up the concluding observations on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

OBJECTIVE:

A systematic and continuous analysis and discussion on children's rights in order to raise awareness of the importance of the CRC and the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

TIMELINE:

2011 – present

PROCESS:

PHASE 1 – INTRODUCTORY EVENT

Goal: Information and awareness-raising

- Translate concluding observations into the main national language and publish them in an attractive manner.
- Organise an introductory event on the concluding observations and recommendations in order to provide NGOs and the government with an overview of the Committee's observations and the need to implement the recommendations.
- Divide the concluding observations into several sections and assign an NGO coordinator to lead each section. Explain the key recommendations, how they can be translated into action and how they correspond to recommendations made by the NGOs.

→ **TIP:** Prepare a summary of the Committee's recommendations and examine whether your expectations have been met.
Do not discuss all recommendations in detail; focus on the most important ones from an NGO perspective.

PHASE 2 – ROUNDTABLES

Goal: To discuss certain child rights-related topics in detail.

- Organise roundtables with government officials and NGOs on a few key issues.
- Discuss specific recommendations, why they were made, what they imply and how they can be implemented.
- Develop an action plan for implementing key recommendations.

→ **TIP:** Invite experts (including Committee members) and parliamentarians to participate in the discussions.

PHASE 3 – FURTHER TRAINING AND PREPARATION OF FACTSHEETS

Goal: To keep the concluding observations visible and explain their meaning and importance.

- Organise trainings on child rights and the concluding observations for representatives of all levels of government in different areas of the country.
- Explain the importance of child rights and the concluding observations and recommendations on an on-going basis to maintain awareness on key issues in the government and the public.
- Prepare factsheets on the Committee’s recommendations and disseminate them amongst NGOs and all levels of government.

→ **TIP:** Build a strong relationship with the media. The more articles on the Committee’s recommendations are published, the more the government will realise their importance. Incorporate follow-up to the concluding observations in project proposals and use project work to highlight the concluding observations.

OUTCOME:

An on-going and active discussion on child rights, the CRC and the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee.

IMPACT:

Government officials, members of parliament and NGOs increased their awareness of child rights. This allowed them to better promote the improvement of children’s rights through programmes, laws and policies (both national and international) in line with their obligations under the CRC.

CHALLENGES:

Many local level authorities have limited knowledge of child rights, the CRC and the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee.

→ **TIP:** Seminars, books and factsheets on child rights can have an impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

FOCUS ON KEY ASPECTS

Stay focused on the most important issues and do not go into too much detail about all of the Committee’s recommendations. It is a step-by-step process.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY

Work closely with the media to ensure active discussions. Have multiple messages from multiple sources over a prolonged period of time.

INTERIM REPORT

Write an interim report after 2.5 years to examine whether all objectives in terms of implementation have been met. If this is not the case, focus on those that have not yet been met.

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CASE STUDY 4

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Workshop on the Implementation of the OPAC concluding observations

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

Child Soldiers International

TITLE OF THE ACTIVITY:

Workshop on the practical application of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC) in the DRC

ABSTRACT:

Child Soldiers International organised a workshop in the DRC to discuss the content of the State report and the OPAC concluding observations with NGOs, UNICEF, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and local government agencies. Participants articulated complementary recommendations and sought to identify practical steps to implement them.

OBJECTIVES:

To promote the effective implementation of the OPAC by disseminating the Committee's concluding observations on OPAC and initiating discussions on their practical implementation amongst key NGO partners. To support efforts by NGOs to conduct advocacy with local authorities, the army, armed groups and to strengthen community prevention mechanisms.

TIMELINE:

February 2012 – April 2012

PROCESS:

PHASE 1 – OPAC WORKSHOP

Goal: To increase knowledge and shared understanding of the concluding observations with a view to promoting their practical implementation.

- Invite NGOs, UN agencies, ICRC and local government agencies working on children in armed conflict at provincial level to participate in a workshop.
- Present the main arguments of the government on a limited number of themes as participants may not have read the State report.
- Evaluate the government's arguments and, on the basis of the participants' experience, determine whether they reflect the reality.

- Identify the main concerns and formulate recommendations within thematic working groups.
- Compare recommendations of the working groups with those of the Committee.
- Strengthen the Committee's recommendations to make them more refined and actionable.
- Identify practical steps that can be taken to implement the recommendations.
- Plan follow-up to the workshop and next steps, including an assessment of existing and needed capacity.

→ **TIP:** Steer the discussions in a manner that allows participants to identify specific and tangible objectives. Ensure that the workshop is long enough to allow time to fully discuss the issues.

PHASE 2 – BOOKLET ON THE PROHIBITION OF CHILD RECRUITMENT AND USE

Goal: To produce a resource for NGOs engaged in direct dialogue with armed groups.

- Prepare a user-friendly booklet on the prohibition of child recruitment and use in the main national languages.
- Distribute it to international and national NGOs working on children in armed conflict and child protection.
- Conduct training workshops on the use of the booklet as a resource for advocacy with political, military and traditional authorities.
- Obtain feedback from those who have already used the booklet locally.

→ **TIP:** Ensure that users of the booklet are included in discussions on OPAC follow-up.

OUTCOME:

A workshop on the Committee's OPAC recommendations combined with a half-day training workshop on the use of Child Soldiers International's illustrated booklet on the prohibition of child recruitment and use.

IMPACT:

The workshop enabled participants to increase their knowledge and shared understanding of the concluding observations on OPAC with a view to promoting their practical implementation in a coordinated and complementary manner, through advocacy and awareness-raising, as well as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes.

CHALLENGES:

GOVERNMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

It is a challenge to work in a country that denies the recruitment and use of child soldiers and is unwilling to engage with international organisations on these issues. Child Soldiers International decided instead to provide support to NGOs working on community-based prevention (targeting armed forces and armed groups and the local communities that support them) as well as advocacy (towards administrative, military and judicial authorities at the provincial level).

IMPLEMENTATION

The NGOs did not want to commit to practical follow-up of the concluding observations. They were happy to discuss what needed to be done in an abstract manner, but not who needed to do what, what needed to change, or what type of resources were needed.

DISTANCE

Some NGOs were based too far away from the workshop venue and could not participate in the activities due to funding constraints. In addition, many NGOs work in isolation making it difficult for them to think about the bigger picture.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

REGULAR WORKSHOPS

Develop an action plan and hold workshops every six months so that NGOs can report on activities that have been undertaken to follow up on the concluding observations.

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CASE STUDY 5

International Non-Governmental Organisation Follow-up on a Thematic Issue

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (GI)

ABSTRACT:

A global network working on one thematic area – prohibition and elimination of violent punishment of children – which supports national NGOs, national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and UN agencies to implement the concluding observations of treaty bodies, through dissemination, awareness-raising and technical assistance.

OBJECTIVE:

To make progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment by law through explicit prohibition in legislation.

TIMELINE:

Ongoing

PROCESS:

INFLUENCE AND DISSEMINATE CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Goal: To encourage national NGOs, NHRIs and UN agencies, which are not already doing so, to advocate for the prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children, as a children's rights priority.

- Alert national NGOs, NHRIs and UN agencies to upcoming examinations by the Committee (and also by other treaty bodies whose mandate includes violent punishment of children).
- Encourage them to brief the treaty bodies on the issue.
- Send NGOs, NHRIs, and UN agencies the relevant recommendations from the concluding observations, together with a GI report on the law relating to corporal punishment and any research evidence on prevalence.
- Encourage follow-up by the national bodies on any recommendations made relating to the prohibition and elimination of violent punishment.
- Disseminate the Committee's General Comments No. 8 and 13 (on the right to protection from corporal punishment and right to freedom from all forms of violence).
- Encourage national organisations to comment on/add to the national report and to pursue the issue at national level, using CRC and other recommendations to increase pressure on their government/parliament.
- Offer technical assistance with the process of law reform.

FOCUS ON LEGISLATIVE REFORM AS THE FOUNDATION FOR ELIMINATION OF VIOLENT PUNISHMENT

Goal: To achieve explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in legislation, covering the home and family and all settings of children's lives, as the necessary foundation for elimination through linked educational and other measures.

- Provide handbooks and briefings, through the website and hard copy dissemination, on how to achieve law reform, including working with government and parliament.
- Disseminate detailed information on States that have achieved full prohibition, including the text of the prohibiting legislation.
- Offer law reform workshops to NGOs and others on a regional basis.
- Encourage use of legal action and quasi-legal action (such as the use of communications procedures) to challenge the legality of corporal punishment in States which continue to ignore repeated recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment from the Committee and other UN and regional human rights monitoring bodies.

→ **TIP:** Develop tools, such as briefings and guides, on legal reform and other measures.

OUTCOME:

Legal reforms to prohibit all corporal punishment of children have increased worldwide.

IMPACT:

Civil society organisations increased their awareness of the measures necessary to implement programmes, laws and policies in line with their obligations under the CRC.

CHALLENGES:

CULTURE AND TRADITION

Prohibition of corporal punishment, especially in the home and family, is invariably an unpopular issue for governments and parliaments, because violent punishment of children has traditionally been socially, as well as legally, approved. In addition, in many States there are groups who argue that violent punishment is supported, or even required, by their religion.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS

National-level organisations need to understand the parliamentary process and find opportunities to use it. They also need expertise – or to be able to identify and use expertise -in drafting legislation and in understanding the parliamentary procedure

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STEPS:

It may be worth inviting Committee members who have expertise in your theme to participate in follow-up activities.

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CASE STUDY 6

Italy Annual Report

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

Gruppo di Lavoro per la Convenzione sui Diritti dell'Infanzia e dell'Adolescenza (Gruppo CRC)

ABSTRACT:

The coalition, Gruppo CRC, produces an annual follow-up report on priority issues identified and highlighted in the concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

OBJECTIVE:

A systematic and comprehensive analysis of the child rights situation in Italy to contribute to, and campaign for, changes in policies and practices, as well as legal reforms, in order to make a real improvement to the status of all children in Italy.

TIMELINE:

2000 – On-going

PROCESS:

PHASE 1: SET PRIORITIES

Goal: To choose the main topics to focus on in the report.

- Select issues considered to be a priority in order to obtain the most extensive data possible on a subject.

→ **TIP:** Use the concluding observations and the expertise of coalition members to set priorities.

PHASE 2: DRAFT REPORT

Goal: To collect information from coalition members to prepare the report.

- Prepare guidelines for monitoring the CRC for members of the coalition.
- Put together a template for NGOs to fill out and describe the issues to be analysed.
- Agree upon including new themes during plenary session of the coalition.
- Create working groups (one for each theme) composed of NGOs working on the same issue and identify a group leader.
- Working groups prepare draft paragraphs by email with concrete recommendations.
- Submit final paragraphs to the report coordinator who assembles the report.
- Approval of draft report by coalition members.

→ **TIP:** Work together regularly to understand each other's approaches better. This will assist in finding compromise and obtaining the strongest possible message as a network.

PHASE 3: LAUNCH REPORT

Goal: To launch the report in order to ensure its wide distribution at national level.

- Distribute the report both in hard copy and electronically.
- Organise a public launch to present the results of the report.
- Present the report to Parliament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Ombudsman.
- Ensure that all national and governmental institutions receive a copy of the report.
- Provide local authorities with copies of the report.
- Provide all members of the coalition and UNICEF with copies of the report so that they can distribute them to their local offices.

→ **TIP:** Participate in children's rights events organised by the government and use this opportunity to distribute the report and add civil society's point of view to the discussions at the event.

PHASE 4: USE REPORT NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

Goal: To seek opportunities where information from the annual report may be relevant.

- Individual NGOs can use relevant sections of the report to lobby government to make changes.
- Submit relevant paragraphs of the annual report to other international human rights bodies such as other treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council.

→ **TIP:** Prepare the annual report in the national language to have the broadest impact nationally, but submit abstracts or summaries in English to international bodies.

OUTCOME:

Produced five annual follow-up reports on the monitoring of the CRC in Italy. Each report has covered more issues as the breadth and depth of the coalition has expanded.

IMPACT:

The report is an opportunity to expose the shortcomings of the Italian system and to undertake an ongoing and constructive debate with public stakeholders that are in charge of children's rights and responsible for the implementation of the rights enshrined in the CRC. The report is seen as a useful reference tool for parliamentarians and officials.

CHALLENGES:

STRONG RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT

Although the ultimate goal is the implementation of the recommendations into national law and policies, most of the recommendations have not been followed-up by the government. Strong relations with governmental bodies are crucial and need to be built, which at times can be challenging, especially due to the high turnover of government officials.

GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITATIONS

The coalition is dominated by NGOs located in the north of Italy, which makes it difficult to obtain data from the south of the country. Some big NGOs have branches or projects throughout Italy, but the amount and quality of information obtained is not consistent.

STRUCTURE OF THE COALITION

The democratic structure of the coalition prevents it from lobbying the government on specific issues. Individual NGOs use the annual report, however, to support their advocacy and lobbying work on specific issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STEPS:

MEDIA COVERAGE

Try to get media coverage and public attention in order to make the content of the report and the coalition more visible throughout the country.

INCREASED REPORT DISTRIBUTION

Develop web-based tools to make content and data from the report more readily available.

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CASE STUDY 7

Peru Monitoring Report

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

La Defensoría del Pueblo

ABSTRACT:

La Defensoría del Pueblo, an A-status national human rights institution, examined, in collaboration with Save the Children, the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of Child from three sets of concluding observations to determine which have been implemented by the Peruvian government.

OBJECTIVE:

To draw the State's attention to the need to implement the recommendations made by the Committee.

TIMELINE:

2010–2011

PROCESS:

PHASE 1 – ESTABLISH PRIORITIES

Goal: To choose the main topics to focus on in the report.

- Choose a limited number of topics on which to focus.
- Choose topics that were mentioned in all previous concluding observations.
- Choose themes that have already been analysed in the past.
- Choose the most urgent issues.

→ **TIP:** Focus on topics where you have plenty of information and the government has the capacity to address.

PHASE 2 – DEVELOP REPORT

Goal: To have a clear overview of each thematic area.

- Collect information on issues chosen.
- Draft a report on each topic following a specific structure:
 - General overview: Refer to important general aspects before dealing with the main subject
 - Legal reform and political instruments: List legal reforms that have been implemented on a national, regional, and international level

- Specific actions: Describe other policies, measures or campaigns that have been undertaken
- Achievements: Describe the actions undertaken
- Gaps: Highlight recommendations that have not yet been implemented
- Conclusions: Make some general comments and conclusions on the progress made

→ **TIP:** Stick to this structure to ensure a clear overview.

PHASE 3 – PRESENTATION

Goal: To present the report to governmental bodies and civil society.

- Present the report to the government, including ministers and other governmental authorities, that have decision-making power.
- Present the report to local and regional authorities.
- Arrange discussions between civil society members, police and other authorities in different cities.
- Draft a document, together with the government, in which you agree on next steps for further implementation of a particular recommendation.

→ **TIP:** Make sure to agree on a timeline.

OUTCOME:

La Defensoría del Pueblo published the report “The Recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Achievements of the Peruvian Government” in order to show what recommendations have been implemented and what still needs to be done. The report highlights implementation gaps and compares the progress the government has made.

IMPACT:

Governmental authorities increased their awareness of the measures needed to implement programmes, laws and policies in line with their obligations under the CRC.

CHALLENGES:

GATHERING INFORMATION

It was difficult to access information and a lot of information was missing or unsystematic, especially in rural areas. Data collection was a very time-consuming process.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

It was necessary to have external financial support to hire experts and consultants to prepare the report. It is important to have a team that is dedicated to collecting data.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STEPS:

MONITORING

It is important to conduct ongoing monitoring and remind the government of the work that needs to be done and to mobilise different stakeholders with whom they can partner.

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CASE STUDY 8

The Philippines Monitoring Indicators

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

Philippine NGO Coalition on the UN CRC (the coalition)

ABSTRACT:

The monitoring process involves the collection and consolidation of data on children's rights in a systematic way using appropriate tools and methods by a team of NGO coalition members. The coalition published a "Guide for monitoring the UN CRC in the Philippines".

OBJECTIVES:

To set up systems and processes to ensure the availability and quality of data and facilitate the participation of more NGOs, networks and children to ensure a more systematic and regular monitoring process. To make the monitoring process broader and more inclusive, in terms of geographical coverage, participation of more organisations and networks, engagement of children and scope of children's issues tackled.

TIMELINE:

2008–2011

PROCESS:

PHASE 1 – FORMING WORKING GROUPS

Goal: To organise members of the coalition according to working groups.

- Form three working groups based on expertise:
 - Systems working group – central coordinating body for the development of monitoring systems and tools by setting up a system for monitoring and ensuring that monitoring is taking place
 - Thematic clusters – consolidate and analyse data submitted by geographic teams and other partner organisations
 - Geographic teams – gather information on thematic clusters in their respective areas
- Provide an orientation for coalition members on monitoring and data collection
- Decide on indicators to be monitored and which members will focus on each area.

→ **TIP:** Prepare a handbook on data collection that can be shared with the members of your network. Encourage members to focus on issues or themes where they are already working so that data generated from programme work can be easily incorporated into the monitoring process.

PHASE 2 – DATA COLLECTION

Goal: To gather data based on thematic and geographic clusters.

- Develop monitoring plans for each area to identify specific indicators, determine data to be collected and establish methodology for collecting data, identifying sources of data and frequency of data collection.
- Solicit data on indicators from children and organisations working with children from all geographic areas.
- Disaggregate data by age, gender, urban/rural area, minority or indigenous groups, ethnicity, disability, religion and other category as appropriate.
- Focus on existing data, reports, research and other information from NGOs.
- Collect data on specific themes by geographic location.
- Interpret data and prepare narrative report by geographic location and submit to relevant thematic cluster working group.
- Consolidate the data received according to thematic rights for processing and analysis. Classify according to geographic cluster for purposes of clarity and monitoring.

→ **TIP:** Keep it simple and use Excel spread sheets for the data collection for a clear overview on what data has been collected and entered.

PHASE 3 – DATA ANALYSIS

Goal: To group collected raw data by thematic clusters and sub-group according to geographic clusters.

- Develop tools for consolidating data.
- Consolidate and analyse the data by thematic cluster.
- Prepare a narrative report for each thematic cluster to be submitted to the systems working group.
- Consolidate the reports either by theme or geographic cluster on an annual or biannual basis.
- Produce mid-term reports for advocacy on specific issues or for submission to other international human rights bodies such as other human rights treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council.

→ **TIP:** Consider publishing an annual report on the child rights situation in your country to ensure more systematic monitoring.

OUTCOME:

The preparation of an alternative report based on reports from thematic clusters.

IMPACT:

The development of a broader and more inclusive monitoring process.

CHALLENGES:

ENGAGEMENT OF MEMBERS

Child rights monitoring requires active engagement and commitment of members, but not all members were able to engage in the data collection process due to time constraints. Even for those who wanted to participate, it was difficult to find a common time for members to meet.

OBTAINING INFORMATION FROM ALL AREAS OF THE COUNTRY

The geographic structure of the country made working together challenging. Coalition members tried to meet up once a month in different parts of the country to discuss the progress made in order to achieve more effective results. Regular phone conferences were also helpful to keep an overview of the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

DEADLINES

Set a deadline for finishing the project to prevent it being over-extended.

TOOLS

Customise tools for consolidating data for specific indicators.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Use the concluding observations from previous reports as the basis for the next alternative report. Highlight the progress that has been made as well as new areas of concern and negative changes.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

Create a comprehensive database that could be used externally by all NGOs in the coalition. A database expert might need to be engaged and additional funding obtained.

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CASE STUDY 9

Senegal Follow-up on Specific Recommendations

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ORGANISATION:

Coalition Nationale des Associations et ONG en Faveur de l'enfant (CONAFE)

ABSTRACT:

The Coalition Nationale des Associations et ONG en Faveur de l'enfant focused on following up on two specific recommendations made in the concluding observations (CRC/C/SEN/CO/2). The first recommendation stipulated the abolition of an administrative circular from the board of education that excluded married and pregnant girls from schools. The second recommendation concerned the protection of 'talibés' children who are exploited for begging and other illicit work that provides money, thus preventing them from having access to health, education and good living conditions.

OBJECTIVE:

To cancel the administrative circular preventing pregnant girls to continue with their education on the basis of their individual ability and to develop and to implement legislation outlawing begging.

TIMELINE:

2006 – Ongoing

PROCESS:

PHASE 1: PLAN OF ACTION

Goal: To integrate specific recommendations into the plan of action of the coalition

- Choose one or two key recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child that need to be implemented as soon as possible.
- Integrate the recommendations into the annual plan of action of the coalition.

PHASE 2: ORGANISE AND PARTICIPATE IN HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS

Goal: To include the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the children's code.

- Organise a meeting with the responsible ministers and participate in the government's advisory councils.
- Raise recommendations of the Committee.
- Lobby for the inclusion of these issues in the proposed children's code.
- Ensure that action is being taken by following up with the government.

→ **TIP:** Work together with other NGOs (both national and international) and international organisations like UNICEF for additional support.

PHASE 3: AWARENESS RAISING

Goal: To raise awareness in order to abolish deeply rooted cultural and religious prejudices.

- Use members of the coalition with expertise in the field to provide awareness raising
- Explain and inform parliamentarians, communities, concerned persons (teachers/parents) as well as individuals (students) on the effects and consequences of the changes in legislation.
- Include all regions of the country in awareness raising activities

→ **TIP:** Continue awareness raising and information campaigns even after legal reforms have taken place.

OUTCOME:

The abolition of the administrative circular preventing married and pregnant girls from continuing with their education. Although the government tried to outlaw begging, religious pressure caused the decree to be withdrawn.

IMPACT:

The government increased its awareness of the measures needed to implement programmes, laws and policies in line with their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Civil society started to rethink and change their views on difficult subjects that are deeply rooted within their culture. The later is a slow and ongoing process that needs time to develop.

CHALLENGES:

PREJUDICE

The deeply rooted views and prejudice within a society's culture, history and religion need effective awareness raising campaigns throughout the country, in all regions, communities, governmental institutions, schools and private households. Abolishing or reforming a law is only the first step.

CONTACTING THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The recommendation of the Committee was crucial for the abolition of the administrative circular, because it was an external view on the country's laws by a highly respected international human rights body. It would have been helpful to have the support of a Committee member or the country rapporteur during the follow-up activities, but CONAFE did not know how to approach the Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Keep following up on the lawful and proper execution of the legal reforms in all regions of the country as well as in governmental institutions, communities, schools and private households. Keep raising awareness amongst civil society in order to change conservative views and prejudice.

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CASE STUDY 10

Sri Lanka Child Centric Budget Analysis (CCBA)

Concluding Observations Follow-up Case Studies: To promote a cyclical approach to engaging in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) and encourage NGOs to use the Committee's recommendations to the fullest in their advocacy work, Child Rights Connect has put together a series of case studies on follow-up activities conducted by NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. For more examples of follow-up activities, please visit www.childrightsconnect.org.

ORGANISATION:

Child Rights Advocacy Network (CRAN)

ABSTRACT:

The Child Centric Budget Analysis (CCBA) involves the analysis of the State budget, by a team of CRAN members, in order to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the funding allocation for children in the national budget.

OBJECTIVES:

A systematic and comprehensive analysis of four sectors of the national budget based on child rights indicators. Gather substantive evidence to advocate for increased resource allocation for children and a separate children's budget.

TIMELINE:

December 2010 – September 2011 (10 months) – Phase 1

PROCESS:

PHASE 1 – FORMING THE CCBA TEAM

Goal: To select members based on their interest, skills as well as their regional background.

- Conduct training workshops on the CCBA in order to give members an overview of the State budget process and the CCBA and how they are linked to child rights advocacy.

→ **TIP:** Team members should have experience in the following areas: knowledge of child rights and the situation of child rights of the country, budgets and budgetary processes, analysis and allocation of resources for children, advocacy and Excel spread sheets. They do not need to be economists.

PHASE 2 – DATA RESEARCH

Goal: To gather budget related documents required for the data entry work.

- Compile key budget documents, financial expenditure reports and related policy documents.
- Conduct a workshop to establish the framework for the research: define the age group, time period, and sectors of the budget to be examined; identify and select ministries/departments and programmes that specifically aim at benefitting children.
- Conduct a line-item by line-item analysis (both current and capital expenditure) of the data, carry out the calculations and enter the data onto spread-sheets.

→ **TIP:** Consult experts in governmental and non- governmental sectors to support and advise you during the entire process.

PHASE 3 – DATA ANALYSIS

Goal: To identify what percentage, if any, of the budget allocation for each sector or programme, is set aside for children

- Convert data into analytical charts using the following criteria:
 1. Allocation and expenditure for each year under study, per programme
 2. Allocation and expenditure for each year under study, per sector
 3. Total budget for children for each year under study
- Formulate key questions:
 1. How much money did the government spend to improve the overall situation of children? Which sectoral or programmatic allocations were prioritised?
 2. Are those expenditures adequate to fulfil children’s needs and rights?
 3. To what extent does the government invest in programmes for children in order to fulfil national and international obligations?
 4. What is missing in the budget allocation and expenditure for children?
- Conduct an analysis of:
 1. Budget for children in the total national budget
 2. Share of the sectors within the budget for children
 3. Share of the sectors as a percentage of the total government budget
 4. Change from allocation to expenditure
 5. Trends in allocations and expenditure in each sector

→ **TIP:** Make sure you have background knowledge on the socio-economic situation in the country as well as an overview on the country’s child rights situation to ensure a better use of the data. Also, consult experts with an economic background to verify your calculations.

OUTCOME:

The compilation and presentation of a report that showed how the government allocated resources specifically for children and where gaps in resource allocation for children remained.

IMPACT:

Civil society organisations in CRAN increased their awareness of how government should be allocating resources specifically for children in order to implement programmes, laws and policies in line with their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

CHALLENGES:

- Time constraints, due to donor requirements, impacted the effectiveness of the process and did not allow for the verification of data by stakeholders.
- Finding strategic contacts in various governmental agencies can be difficult. Relations with government stakeholders need to be built and strategic methods to obtain information need to be developed.
- The absence of a centralised database can be an obstacle when trying to gain a comprehensive understanding of the actual child rights situation in the country. Efforts should be made to lobby for such a database at national level.
- Data entry requires time and patience and a suitable venue to carry out this activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

VERIFY FINDINGS

The findings of the analysis should be presented to relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders for verification. Data should be verified to check for errors, gaps and inconsistencies.

ADVOCATE AND LOBBY

The findings of the CCBA should be used to advocate for optimal financial allocation and expenditure for the realisation of children's rights. The government should be asked to increase the visibility of children in the State budget (short-term) and prepare and publish a separate budget for children (long-term).

BUDGET TRACKING

To understand the implementation of the budget process and its effects on children at the local level, a budget tracking exercise is recommended. Advocacy initiatives could be taken based on the findings of the budget tracking and the CCBA to hold government accountable.

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