



# JOIN AND BE CHILD RIGHTS CONNECT

## NETWORK CONCEPT

## **Introduction**

This Network Concept describes the purpose and functioning of Child Rights Connect. It contributes to strengthening Child Rights Connect's identity as a global network and maximising its potential for improving the realisation of children's rights. It aims to clarify systemic issues within the network, in order to maximise members' involvement, cooperation and success of Child Rights Connect.

The Network Concept has been developed in consultation with members of Child Rights Connect conducted in 2016. It is governed by Child Rights Connect's Statutes and Mission. The document itself has been developed by the Secretariat and the Executive Committee.

In line with the evolution of the network itself, this is a living document. The Network Concept will be further developed and adapted in parallel with Child Rights Connect's strategic planning cycle.

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President of Child Rights Connect Executive Committee

Geneva, April 2017

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## 1. Background

In its more than 30 years of existence, Child Rights Connect has undergone many changes and developments. At the very beginning, the main purpose of the network was to facilitate reporting to the newly established United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. Members of Child Rights Connect contributed to this work with financial and technical support.

While this initial aim has remained a very important element of the work of Child Rights Connect, the organisation and its programmes have developed over the years. New members have joined the network with different expectations; a Secretariat was established; the work demand changed in relation to the developing United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and creation of the Human Rights Council; and as processes became well-established, new programme areas were added.

Strategic decisions were taken to develop the organisation to meet these new opportunities and challenges. Changes included improving public communications and changing the name from the “NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child” to Child Rights Connect in 2013. There resulted a gradual change in the purpose of Child Rights Connect.

During the first year of the Strategic Plan 2015-2019, internal assessments and an external evaluation confirmed that Child Rights Connect needed to clarify its identity and functioning as a network, in order to strengthen the organisation and fulfil its potential as a global network for the realisation of children’s rights.

This document represents a milestone in strengthening the network. Child Rights Connect has now reached a new understanding of the purpose and functioning of its network: **The network is, by definition, Child Rights Connect.**

## 2. Vision, Mission and Purpose of Child Rights Connect

Child Rights Connect is a global network working for the realisation of children’s rights.

The overall rationale for the existence of the network is defined by Child Rights Connect’s **Vision:** “*Child Rights Connect envisions a world in which all children enjoy their rights, as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child*” and **Mission:** “*The realisation of children’s rights through the UN human rights system.*”.

The **purpose** of the network is outlined in the [Statutes, Article 3](#), [p. 13] adopted by the General Assembly in 2016.

### 3. Nature of the Network

Child Rights Connect comprises almost 100 independent organisations. It is unique in its global outreach and its diversity, constituting a strong and credible global voice on children’s rights.

Child Rights Connect is guided by the following values:



### 4. Membership

The membership of Child Rights Connect is open to “civil society organisations and networks of NGOs, which are committed to the vision of Child Rights Connect and the purpose...” ([Statutes, Article 4](#) [p.14]). Members of coalitions or umbrella organisations are encouraged to work with Child Rights Connect through their mother organisation.

Members are a part of the network and participate in it, but remain autonomous. They contribute to and benefit from the network.

By joining the network, organisations declare that they share Child Rights Connect’s common vision and strategic objectives, and that they agree to the common rules described in this Network Concept and its [ANNEXES: Organisational Policies and Rules](#). [p.13]

Staff from member organisations represent their organisations in Child Rights Connect. Through joint actions in the network, they also represent Child Rights Connect towards strategic partners and the general public (see [Corporate Identity Guidelines for Members](#) [p.26]).

## Member Commitments

Members contribute through sharing their strengths, experience, knowledge and programmatic outreach to the network (see detailed [Member Commitments](#) [p.21])



While being a member, member organisations can also influence Child Rights Connect’s strategic objectives and overall network policies through participation in member’s consultations and voting at the General Assembly.

Network activities are implemented by members, by groups of members, by the Secretariat, or by the Secretariat with individual or groups of members.

**Activities of the Working Groups and activities with involvement of the Secretariat are network activities, but not all activities of members are network activities.** Activities of members can become network activities if they are implemented within the agreed Strategic Plan and annual work plans, or in cooperation with the Secretariat.

## Member Benefits

Members benefit from being associated with a highly acclaimed global network and trusted partner of the United Nations human rights organs (see detailed [Member Benefits](#) [p.20])



## Member Responsibilities

Members of Child Rights Connect are obliged to fulfil a few basic responsibilities (see detailed [Member Responsibilities](#) [p.21]):



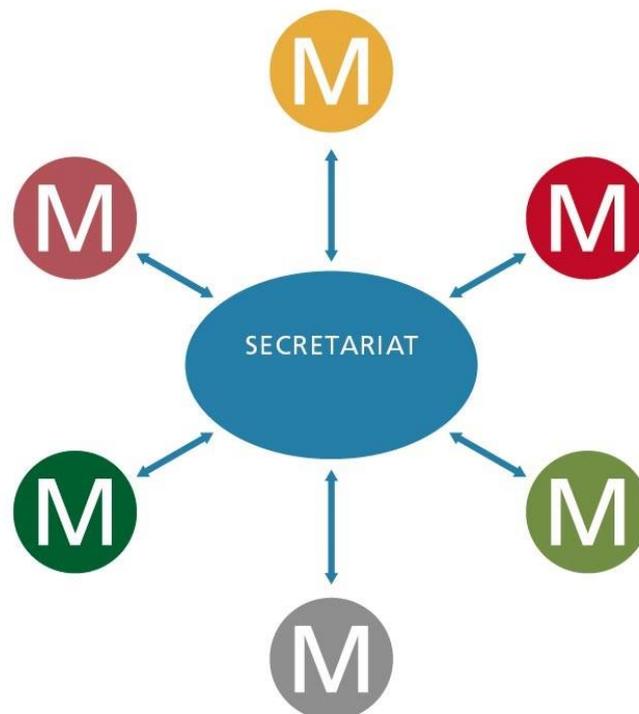
Read on [How to apply for membership](#) [p.22] and on [Termination of membership](#) [p.22] in the [Membership Guidelines](#) [p.20].

## Functioning of the Network

### Network Management

To ensure the professional administration, coordination and development of the network, the Secretariat:

- Administers membership
- Ensures preparation and coordination for network events
- Facilitates communication to and from members with tools, platforms and guidance, including:
  - Sharing information from members with the wider network
  - Collecting information on children’s rights developments at the UN and sharing it with the network
  - Developing and maintaining different communications tools to ensure effective communications in the network, such as the member news, website and social media



*Diagram 1: Network Management*

### Programme Implementation

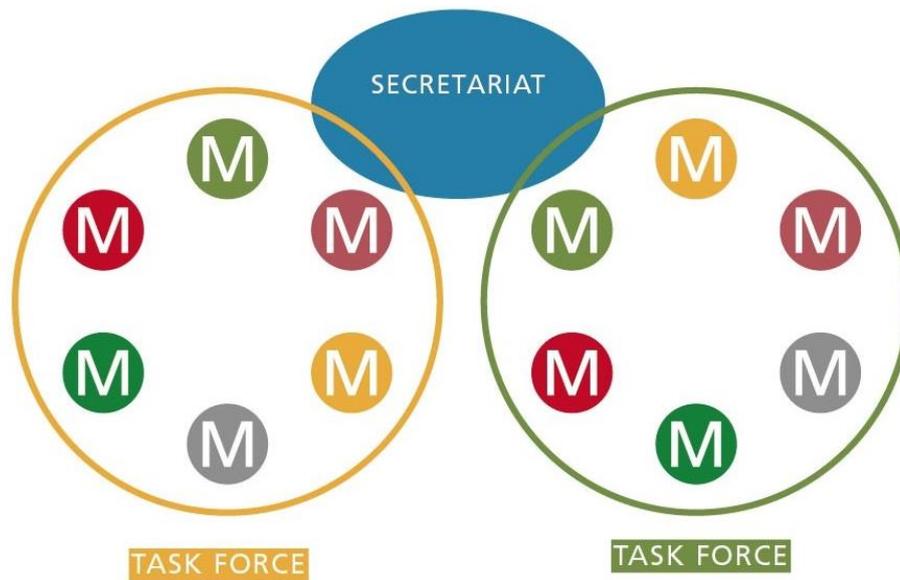
The Secretariat leads the development, review, planning and implementation of the Strategic Plan in cooperation with members. It directly implements and ensures the coordination of certain areas of work; and contributes to other areas of work led by members. Each area of work is defined in a detailed work plan.

Tasks are divided to ensure efficiency and to avoid duplication. This is achieved by members communicating to the Secretariat, who then shares this information with the whole network.

## Task Forces

A Task Force can be created by the Secretariat for coordinating interested members on a Secretariat-led project or activity. The Secretariat leads and coordinates Task Forces.

Members who commit to cooperate in a Task Force ensure sufficient human resources to implement the work as jointly agreed in the Task Force. Task Forces have the responsibility to prepare, implement and follow-up on the information and involvement of the whole network in the respective area.



*Diagram 2: Child Rights Connect Task Forces*

## Working Groups

Working Groups are initiated and run on the initiative of at least three members of Child Rights Connect, as outlined in the [Statutes, Article 4](#) [p.14] and the [Working Group Guidelines](#) [p.23]. Members can set themselves a specific task, objective or a project that they want to fulfil jointly.

Working Groups are integral parts of the network of Child Rights Connect. When acting within a Working Group, members represent both their own organisation, as well as Child Rights Connect, and therefore adhere to the rules and policies of Child Rights Connect. The specific issues of Working Groups reflect the main priorities of the network, complementing the overall strategic objectives, as defined in the Strategic Plan.

The Secretariat channels information and aligns planning processes of the Working Groups in order to maximise synergies, while maintaining the Working Groups' autonomy in defining their priorities.

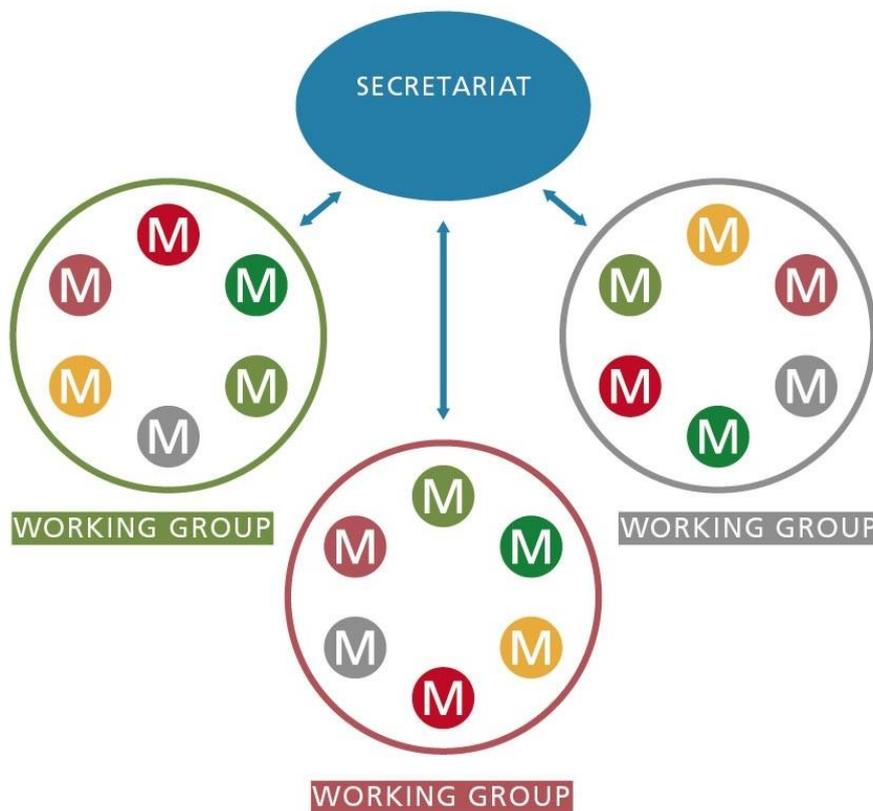
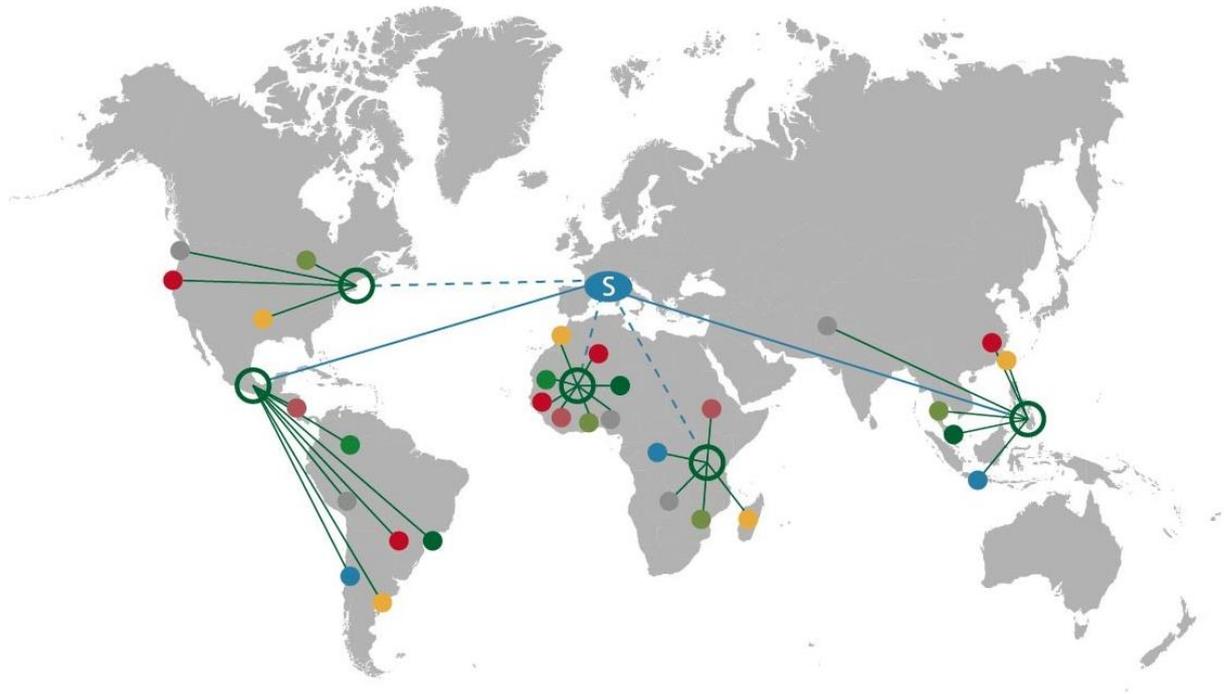


Diagram 3: Child Rights Connect Working Groups

## Regional and National Coordination

Acting in line with the priorities of Child Rights Connect, and focusing on explicit networking goals, the network is expanding its reach and is building links at national, regional and international levels.

Members are encouraged to act as regional or national hubs and support regional and national sharing, learning and coordination of actions as appropriate.



*Diagram 4: Child Rights Connect Regional Coordination*

## Community of Practice and Ad-Hoc Exchange and Interaction

Members of Child Rights Connect are encouraged to interact and exchange with members and the Secretariat in other ways that further the goals of Child Rights Connect.

Communities of practice can be initiated when need arises on an ad-hoc basis. Members of such a group come together voluntarily to share and develop their knowledge, solve common problems, and support each other in finding answers. Examples might include fundraising, communications or network management.



## ANNEXES: Organisational Policies and Rules

# Statutes

### PREAMBLE

Child Rights Connect began its activities as an informal group under the name of “Ad Hoc NGO Group for the drafting of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child” in 1983. At the Founding Assembly on October 23, 1998, the General Assembly formed as “NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child” by adopting its statutes under articles 60-79 of the Swiss Civil Code referring to associations. The statutes were revised and adopted by the General Assembly on November 23, 2007. Amendments of articles 14 and 20 were approved by the General Assembly on June 29, 2010. The amendment of the statutes replacing “NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child” with the new name “Child Rights Connect” was approved by the General Assembly on March 11, 2013.

A general revision of the statutes was undertaken by the Executive Committee starting in June 2014 and the present statutes were adopted by the General Assembly on March 4, 2016.

### I NAME, HEADQUARTERS, DURATION AND PURPOSE

#### Article 1

Child Rights Connect is a non-profit association of NGOs governed by the present statutes and by Articles 60-79 of the Swiss Civil Code. It is politically neutral and non-denominational.

#### Article 2

The headquarters of Child Rights Connect is in the Canton of Geneva (Switzerland).

The duration of Child Rights Connect is unlimited.

#### Article 3

The purpose of Child Rights Connect is to advocate for and support the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols for the realisation of children’s rights worldwide. Child Rights Connect does this by convening and engaging with civil society and other relevant actors, by fostering cooperation, and by empowering children’s rights defenders, including children, to meaningfully participate in global advocacy for children’s rights at different levels.

## **II MEMBERSHIP**

### **Article 4**

Membership of Child Rights Connect is open to civil society organisations and networks of NGOs, which are committed to the vision of Child Rights Connect and the purpose as stated in article 3.

### **Article 5**

Member organisations are obliged to fully adhere to the statutes, organisational policies and rules of Child Rights Connect and to pay the membership fees.

Member organisations are expected to actively participate in the activities of Child Rights Connect.

### **Article 6**

Requests to become a member organisation must be addressed to the Executive Committee of Child Rights Connect in writing. The Executive Committee recommends applicants complying with the Child Rights Connect membership criteria to the General Assembly. The General Assembly approves the admission of new member organisations by a simple majority vote.

### **Article 7**

Member organisations can terminate their membership through a written resignation, notifying the Executive Committee at least six months before the end of the financial year of Child Rights Connect.

Membership may be terminated by the General Assembly by a simple majority vote upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee for good cause.

In all cases of termination of membership, the membership fee for the year of termination remains due.

## **III FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

### **Article 8**

The financial resources of Child Rights Connect are derived from

- Membership fees
- Donations and legacies
- Public and private grants
- Revenue from events conducted by Child Rights Connect
- Any other resources authorised by the law.

### **Article 9**

Only the assets of Child Rights Connect can be used for obligations and commitments contracted in its name. Members have no personal liability.

Members of the Executive Committee are also personally liable for their illicit acts.

## **IV GOVERNANCE ORGANS**

### **Article 10**

Child Rights Connect includes the following organs:

1. The General Assembly
2. The Executive Committee
3. The Secretariat.

## **V GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **Article 11**

The General Assembly is the supreme organ of Child Rights Connect. It consists of all members of the association.

### **Article 12**

The General Assembly has the authority and duty to:

- Approve and amend the statutes
- Admit and terminate membership
- Elect the members of the Executive Committee and the president
- Appoint a Statutory Auditor for the accounts
- Grant discharge to the Executive Committee
- Approve the formation and dissolution of Working Groups
- Approve the strategic plan
- Approve the annual reports and financial statements
- Validate the annual plans and budgets
- Set the annual membership fees
- Decide to dissolve Child Rights Connect.

### **Article 13**

The General Assembly holds its ordinary meeting once a year. Member organisations are expected to attend and actively participate in General Assembly meetings.

It may hold extraordinary meetings when necessary by the request of the Executive Committee or by the written request of minimum of one fifth of the member organisations of Child Rights Connect.

Meetings can be held physically or at distance, and votes can be conducted virtually.

The president shall inform the members of the date and the draft agenda of the General Assembly in writing at least eight weeks in advance.

Member organisations can propose additional agenda points for the agenda minimum six weeks prior to the meeting. The president includes these agenda points in the final agenda.

The members shall register to attend or to vote by proxy at the General Assembly four weeks prior to the meeting.

The detailed information, including enclosures, shall be sent to each member at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.

#### **Article 14**

The General Assembly meeting is chaired by the president of Child Rights Connect. If the president is not available, the General Assembly is chaired by the vice president, the secretary, or the treasurer.

#### **Article 15**

The General Assembly meeting is considered valid, if a minimum of one third of the voting member organisations are represented either physically or by proxy.

If the quorum is not reached, a renewed General Assembly meeting – conducted with physical presence or remote participation - is organised one month later, which is valid, irrespective of the number of members represented.

#### **Article 16**

Decisions of the General Assembly are taken by a simple majority vote of the member organisations represented (physically or by proxy).

Decisions concerning the amendment of the statutes or the dissolution of Child Rights Connect require the approval of a two-thirds majority of the member organisations represented (physically or by proxy) at the General Assembly meeting.

#### **Article 17**

Every member organisation has one vote in the General Assembly, if the membership fee for the previous year has been paid according to the regulations for membership fees.

Any voting member organisation that is unable to attend the General Assembly may appoint another voting member organisation to vote on their behalf (voting by proxy). Voting by proxy has to be announced to the Secretariat in writing a minimum of seven days prior to each General Assembly meeting.

Any nominated proxy organisation may only vote on behalf of a maximum of two other member organisations.

Votes are by show of voting cards and show of proxy cards.

Voting can take place by secret ballot, if at least one member organisation requests it.

#### **Article 18**

The General Assembly can admit observers from other NGOs, international or governmental organisations. Observers can participate in the General Assembly with an advisory role. They have no vote.

### **VI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

#### **Article 19**

The Executive Committee is mandated by the General Assembly to provide strategic guidance, as well as managerial and fiduciary oversight, to the secretariat of Child Rights Connect and to represent Child Rights Connect externally.

The Executive Committee has the authority and responsibilities as specified in the Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee, approved by the General Assembly.

The Executive Committee is accountable to the General Assembly.

#### **Article 20**

Members of the Executive Committee are elected by the General Assembly from among individuals from member organisations by a simple majority vote.

Candidates for the Executive Committee have to be nominated by a member organisation and seconded by at least one additional member organisation.

Members of the Executive Committee are acting in their personal capacity.

Members of the Executive Committee are elected for a term of two years, which can be renewed twice, i.e. a maximum of six years. After three full terms, a minimum of one year must elapse before the person can be nominated again.

#### **Article 21**

The president is elected by the General Assembly from among the members of the Executive Committee by a simple majority vote.

The term of office of the president is two years with the possibility of re-election for one additional term, i.e. a maximum of four years.

#### **Article 22**

The Executive Committee is composed of a minimum of seven and a maximum of eleven members. The Executive Committee can add up to a maximum of three additional members by co-option.

There can be no more than one person from each member organisation standing for elections to the Executive Committee.

#### **Article 23**

The Executive Committee meets at least three times a year or more often, if the interests of Child Rights Connect require.

Regular meetings are initiated upon invitation of the president. Additional meetings can be summoned by written request of at least three members of the Executive Committee.

#### **Article 24**

The Executive Committee is chaired by the president of Child Rights Connect. If the president is not available, the Executive Committee is chaired by the vice president, the secretary, or the treasurer.

The director of Child Rights Connect is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee with a consultative status and has no vote. Other employees of Child Rights Connect can be invited as non-voting members for consultation, information and to take minutes of the meeting.

The Executive Committee can summon closed meetings at its discretion.

#### **Article 25**

An Executive Committee meeting reaches a quorum when at least half of the members are present either physically or by teleconference.

#### **Article 26**

Decisions of the Executive Committee are taken by consensus or by a simple majority vote. In case of deadlock, the chairperson shall have the casting vote.

#### **Article 27**

The Executive Committee establishes a bureau consisting of the president, a vice president, a secretary and a treasurer.

The terms of office of the members of the bureau are two years with the possibility of re-election for two additional terms, i.e. a maximum of six years.

#### **Article 28**

The bureau coordinates the work between the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

The bureau and the members of the bureau have the authority and responsibilities as specified in the Terms of Reference.

### **VII SECRETARIAT**

#### **Article 29**

Child Rights Connect has a Secretariat, which, under the guidance of the Executive Committee, is entrusted with the implementation of the strategic plan as well as the operational and financial management of Child Rights Connect, according to the decisions of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.

#### **Article 30**

The director is appointed by the Executive Committee and is responsible to ensure the professional management and administration of the Child Rights Connect network, its programmes, its office and the Secretariat staff.

### **VIII WORKING GROUPS**

#### **Article 31**

A minimum of three Child Rights Connect member organisations can form into a working group, in order to collaborate on issues related to the purpose, mission and strategy of Child Rights Connect.

Working groups commit to operate in the framework of the Child Rights Connect regulations for working groups.

#### **Article 32**

Working groups are confirmed or dissolved upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee by a simple majority vote of the General Assembly.

### **Article 33**

Working groups appoint a convenor or two co-convenors. Any person representing a member organisation, who is part of the working group, can be elected as convenor. The convenor is appointed for a minimum of two years. This term can be renewed twice.

In the case of two co-convenors, the working group appoints a contact person for the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat of Child Rights Connect for planning, reporting and coordination purposes.

## **IX STATUTORY AUDITOR**

### **Article 34**

The General Assembly appoints or confirms an independent Statutory Auditor every year, for a maximum term of five years, who shall audit the accounts and prepare the report for the General Assembly, in conformity with Swiss law.

The Statutory Auditor is entitled to demand, at any time, the presentation of the accounting books and documents.

## **X GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 35**

Child Rights Connect is legally bound by joint signature of two representatives of the Executive Committee or authorised employees of the Secretariat, as defined in the financial policy and the signatory procedures. The financial policy and signatory procedures are validated by the Executive Committee.

### **Article 36**

The financial year commences on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January and ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December.

## **XI DISSOLUTION**

### **Article 37**

The dissolution of Child Rights Connect can only be decided by a General Assembly specially convened. The call for such a General Assembly has to be announced at least one month in advance of the suggested date for the General Assembly.

A majority of three-quarters of the votes of members represented is required to decide on dissolution.

### **Article 38**

Should Child Rights Connect be dissolved, the General Assembly shall designate the body in charge of the liquidation of its assets. The available assets have to be transferred to a non-profit organisation pursuing public interest goals similar to those of Child Rights Connect, and likewise benefiting from tax exemption. Under no circumstances can the assets be returned to the founders or members, nor may they use a part or a total of assets for their own benefit.

These statutes were adopted by the General Assembly of March 4, 2016.



## Membership Guidelines

### Member Benefits

As a member of Child Rights Connect you can benefit by:

- Accessing expertise on UN Human Rights mechanisms
- Receiving information about children's rights issues and child rights-related developments at the UN
- Receiving information about other member organisations
- Leveraging your work by participating in joint activities, events and advocacy
- Participating in the network's Working Groups or initiating Working Groups on your priority issues
- Participating in Task Forces
- Benefitting from capacity building activities of the network, learning from others and sharing expertise with others
- Promoting your organisation's work to a global audience
- Networking, sharing and exchanging knowledge and experience within the network, enlarging personal and professional networks
- Influencing the strategic development of Child Rights Connect by:
  - actively contributing to the development of policies and strategies
  - participating in the General Assembly;
  - being elected as a member of Child Rights Connect's Executive Committee

### Membership Criteria

The membership of Child Rights Connect is open to independent civil society organisations and networks of NGOs, which are committed to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to the Vision and purpose of Child Rights Connect.

Organisations which are members of coalitions or umbrella organisations are encouraged to work with Child Rights Connect through their mother organisation.

In order to apply for membership, organisations need to

- fulfill these criteria
- be ready to fulfil all member responsibilities and to commit to make additional contributions to the network
- be recommended for membership by at least one member of Child Rights Connect

## **Member Responsibilities**

As a member of Child Rights Connect you are responsible to:

- Fully adhere to the Statutes and Organisational Policies and Rules of Child Rights Connect
- Pay annual membership fee in advance of the General Assembly and provide annual budget and accounts of member organisation/coalition
- Ensure allocation of time/human resources for the engagement with the network, in order to contribute to the strategic objectives
- Inform the Secretariat of any significant changes in the organisation, such as change in contact person, name change, change of statutes, vision or mission, or dissolution of the organisation
- Inform the Secretariat of your separate work, that might be overlapping or conflicting with the work of the network

## **Member Commitments**

In addition to the basic responsibilities, members are invited to commit to the following:

- Participate in and contribute to the General Assembly, surveys and consultations, and other Child Rights Connect events
- Engage in joint advocacy
- Participate in and contribute to Working Groups and Task Forces
- Share information, good practices and expertise with the network
- Work towards the Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives of Child Rights Connect
- Establish links and partnerships to other networks and coalitions
- Create and use synergies
- Increase Child Rights Connect's visibility
- Raise awareness about Child Rights Connect to potential new members and donors and invite them to join and support.
- Raise funds for joint projects
- Support Child Rights Connect's core functioning with additional funds

## **Membership Fees**

Membership fees are crucial for the sustainability of Child Rights Connect. They are generally the only unrestricted funds that can be used to build up reserves, and allocated in case of financial shortfalls.

With their fees and other contributions, members express their support and commitment to Child Rights Connect, which is a key indicator for the relevance of the network for potential new donors.

The amount to be paid by each member organisation depends on their annual budget for the year of payment:

Annual budget (equivalent to Swiss Francs, CHF)	Annual membership fee
Less than CHF 500'000	CHF 150
CHF 500'000 – CHF 1'000'000	CHF 500
CHF 1'000'000 – CHF 2'000'000	CHF 1'000
CHF 2'000'000 – CHF 5'000'000	CHF 2'500
CHF 5'000'000 – CHF 25'000'000	CHF 5'000
CHF 25'000'000 – CHF 50'000'000	CHF 10'000
More than CHF 50'000'000	CHF 15'000

For coalitions, networks or umbrella organisations there are two options to define the level of the membership fee:

- If they base their membership fee on the budget of their coordinating secretariat, only the secretariat benefits from the membership of Child Rights Connect. All information sharing, coordination and other outreach to their own members must be ensured through their own secretariat.
- If they wish their members to enjoy Child Rights Connect member benefits, the membership fees is to be based on the global budget of the umbrella organisation.

Additional clause: For any member providing Child Rights Connect with core-funding or project funds of 20'000 CHF, or greater, fees (in addition to core/project funds) will be capped at a maximum, depending on income where lower rates apply, of 5'000 CHF.

Membership fees are to be paid in advance of the General Assembly, within 30 days upon receipt of the invoice sent by the Child Rights Connect Secretariat.

### **How to apply for Membership**

Organisations fulfilling the member criteria are invited to apply for membership through the Child Rights Connect application platform: <http://www.childrightsconnect.org/membership-application/>

The deadline for applications is December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.

The Executive Committee reviews applications on an annual basis and recommends organisations fulfilling all criteria and requirements to the General Assembly for admittance.

The Executive Committee reserves the right not to recommend organisations to the General Assembly at their own discretion.

### **Termination of Membership**

Member organisations can terminate their membership through a written resignation, notifying the Executive Committee at least six months before the end of the calendar year. The resignation letter is to be sent to the Secretariat, who will inform the Executive Committee accordingly.

Members, who are not adhering to the main responsibilities are excluded from Child Rights Connect upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and confirmed by the General Assembly. In all cases of termination of membership, the membership fee for the year of termination remains due.



## Working Group Guidelines

### **Purpose and Criteria of Working Groups**

The purpose of Child Rights Connect Working Groups is to allow members to collaborate on issues related to the purpose, mission and strategy of the network. The Working Groups form an integral part of the network.

The specific issues of Working Groups are defined by members, and reflect the priority issues of the network for discussion and advocacy at international level, in addition to the work defined in the strategy and led by the Secretariat.

Working Groups consist of a minimum of three Child Rights Connect members, who agree on an area for collaboration, including other interested members of the network, for the course of at least 3-5 years.

Working Groups have a convener or two co-conveners, who are defined by the members of the Working Group for a time period defined by the members of the Working Group.

For any given time Working Groups have one main responsible person to be the contact person with the Secretariat of Child Rights Connect.

### **Formation of Working Groups**

Member organisations wishing to form a Working Group on a specific issue need to identify at least two additional members committed to engage in the Working Group.

The three members identify a convener or two co-conveners for the Working Group, the name of the Working Group, and its purpose and objectives.

With this information, they can apply to become a Child Rights Connect Working Group by contacting Child Rights Connect's Secretariat.

Applications are reviewed by the Executive Committee once a year, and Working Groups corresponding to the criteria are recommended to the General Assembly for confirmation.

Deadline for submission of the application is three months before the General Assembly.

### **Dissolution of Working Groups**

If a Working Group has achieved its objectives or fulfilled its purpose, or if there are less than three members who want to continue the collaboration on that issue, the members can decide to dissolve the Working Group.

Information about the dissolution of the Working Group needs to be submitted to the Secretariat before the General Assembly with reasons for the dissolution, and the minutes of the meeting, where

the dissolution was decided by all members of the group. The dissolution is communicated to the General Assembly by the Executive Committee.

If a Working Group breaches the rules and policies of Child Rights Connect, if it is not active for the course of more than one year and/or if the convenors are not fulfilling their responsibilities, the Executive Committee can decide to recommend to the General Assembly to dissolve the Working Group.

### **Participants in Working Groups**

#### *Members of working groups:*

Members of Child Rights Connect can become members of Working Groups. The members of Working Groups can decide to invite other organisations to contribute to the work of the group as follows:

#### *Observers:*

Organisations can participate in Child Rights Connect's Working Groups as observers without membership status for one year before applying for membership at Child Rights Connect. Observers have consultative status, but no voting rights, should decisions be taken by vote.

#### *Strategic Partners:*

Expert Agencies that are not eligible to become members of Child Rights Connect, can participate in the Working Groups as strategic partners. Strategic Partners have consultative status, but no voting rights, should decisions be taken by vote.

### **Responsibilities**

*Members of Working Groups* are responsible to dedicate sufficient time to actively participate in the work of the group, to respond to requests from the convenor, and to ensure dissemination of information within their organisation.

*Observers* are expected to dedicate sufficient time to actively participate in the work of the group, to respond to requests from the convenor, and to apply for membership at Child Rights Connect after one year, if they are interested in continuing participation in the Working Group.

#### *Conveners*

Conveners are responsible:

- to coordinate and manage the Working Group, ensure participation and joint decision taking regarding the planning, implementation, communication, reporting, acceptance of new members or dissolution of the Working Group.
- to ensure that the Working Group adheres to the rules and policies of Child Rights Connect, including the [Corporate Identity Guidelines for Members](#) [p.26].

- to ensure that the Working Group defines its own rules of procedures for decision taking (consensus, voting, etc.), distribution of tasks and responsibilities.
- to ensure that all members and observers are contributing to the work of the group, to exclude inactive members from the group, and to update the list of members, observers and strategic partners annually.
- to make all relevant information on the work of the Working Group accessible to all members of Child Rights Connect, by uploading plans, meeting agendas and minutes on the member space of the website.
- to submit the annual plan and budget of the Working Group to the Secretariat by September 15 of the previous year, and the annual report by January 15 of the following year.
- to ensure reporting of the work of the Working Group at the General Assembly.
- to liaise with the Secretariat for exchange on substance, to seek expert advice and to develop synergies with other Working Groups and the network as a whole.
- to ensure the Working Group's collaboration with the Secretariat for financial issues and fundraising.

### **Coordination and Information Sharing with the Network**

The Secretariat ensures a member space on the website, where all members of Child Rights Connect can receive all relevant information about the work of the Working Groups, such as annual plans, reports, meeting agendas and minutes, as well as other relevant information.

Materials and publications developed by the Working Groups and webcasts of events are made accessible to the broader public on the Child Rights Connect website.

### **Funding of Working Group activities**

Working Group activities are mainly funded by the members of the group through in-kind contributions (working time) and covering of expenses for activities and events.

If the budget allows, Child Rights Connect can contribute to the expenses of events. In order to increase budgets for Working Groups, Child Rights Connect is committed to raise funds for the Working Groups in collaboration with the Working Group members.

Members should consider channelling funds for Working Groups through the Secretariat of Child Rights Connect. Timely planning and full-cost budgeting by the Working Groups is crucial for being successful in this endeavour.



## Corporate Identity Guidelines for Members

### Use of Name

The name, Child Rights Connect (as registered with the World Intellectual Property Organisation) must always appear in full. It must never be abbreviated or translated.

### Child Rights Connect Logo

The logo must not be altered in any way. It must always include both the picture and the name of the organisation, unless an exception is specifically approved by the Secretariat.

The size of the logo may be modified within reason, but the name of the organisation must be visible and legible.

### Logo Usage

Members may use the Child Rights Connect logo without written agreement from the Secretariat only in relation to their work within a Working Group.

Working Groups are obliged to use the name and logo of Child Rights Connect.

The Child Rights Connect logo can be used together with the logos of the members of the Working Group if the following are the case:

- All members of the Working Group agree.
- The logo of Child Rights Connect must be complemented with an indication, that it refers to the Working Group, and that the other logos are the ones of the Working Group members.
- Logos of Observers and Strategic Partners of the Working Group must appear separately.

### Representation of Child Rights Connect

Members may represent Child Rights Connect in the frame of officially communicated and approved activities: in Working Groups, Task Forces, Secretariat-led projects or other activities when invited by the Secretariat or the Executive Committee.

Official advocacy positions of Child Rights Connect must be within the frame of the Statutes, Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan of Child Rights Connect. They can be elaborated by Working Groups or the Secretariat.

If ad-hoc groups of members wish to issue an advocacy position or conduct an event in the name of Child Rights Connect and without the participation of the Secretariat, a written request needs to be addressed to the Executive Committee for approval.



## Role of the Secretariat

The Statutes state (Article 29):

*Child Rights Connect has a Secretariat, which, under the guidance of the Executive Committee, is entrusted with the implementation of the strategic plan as well as the operational and financial management of Child Rights Connect, according to the decisions of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.*

As a formal network with its own vision, mission and goals, the strategic and operational work of the Secretariat has internal and external objectives. The internal objectives concern the functioning and development of the network itself, the external objectives concern programmatic activities.

The Secretariat, therefore, has two major functions: 1) to administer, coordinate and strengthen the network, and 2) to lead the implementation of the work in cooperation with members towards achieving the goals, strategic and annual objectives of Child Rights Connect.

### **Network Management**

The Secretariat is responsible to ensure professional administration, coordination and development of the network. The activities entail:

- Membership administration: management of contacts, membership fees, providing information to members about the network and its functioning
- Ensure preparations and coordination for network events: General Assembly, meetings of the Executive Committee, other network events.
- Ensure information to and involvement of members in network activities:
  - Communications: website, member space on website, member news
  - Working Groups: provide guidance to form and coordinate Working Groups, ensure communication and synergies between Working Groups, support in funding and communications.
  - Share information from members
  - Create space and opportunities for members' interaction and exchange
- Inform members of network activities and involve them:
  - Reach out to members for joint advocacy action, expert inputs, etc.
  - Lead and coordinate Task-Forces
  - Involve members in overlapping areas of work and when relevant

## **Programme Implementation**

The Secretariat develops the annual work plans based on the Strategic Plan and in consultation with members, which describes the network areas of work and activities. The Secretariat leads the implementation of the annual work plans in cooperation with the members.

The Secretariat is directly operational in the implementation of certain areas of work and activities, leads the coordination of these areas of work with members, and contributes to other areas of work in the lead of members, as defined in the work plan.

For the strong positioning of the network and successful implementation of the work the following principles are important:

- The work is defined based on complementarity of work done by the members and work done by the network, as well as identification of synergies.
- Tasks are divided in order to ensure efficiency, and to avoid duplication. This is possible through systematic communication from members to the Secretariat, which ensures systematic and timely sharing of this information to the whole network.