

Terms of Reference

Communications capacity-building of Child Rights Connect staff

Type of contract: Consultancy

Location: Online (*unless the consultant is based in Geneva, Switzerland and in-person meetings are possible in the COVID-19 context*)

Indicative start date: July 2021

Indicative end date: January 2022

Child Rights Connect (CRCnct) is seeking (a) qualified consultant(s) to undertake a capacity-building programme for its Secretariat staff from July 2021 to January 2022, with a view to enhance their external and internal communication skills, in support of the organisation's mission.

1. Overview of Child Rights Connect

Child Rights Connect (CRCnct) is an independent, non-profit network founded in 1983 and made up of more than 90 national, regional, and international non-governmental organisations dedicated to the promotion and protection of children's rights throughout the world.

CRCnct envisions a world in which all children have their human rights respected, protected, promoted and fulfilled, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols. CRCnct advocates for and supports 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.

CRCnct does this by convening and engaging with civil society and other relevant actors, by fostering cooperation and collaboration, and by empowering children's rights defenders, including children, to meaningfully participate in global advocacy for children's rights at different levels.

2. Background of capacity-building programme

CRCnct's work is guided by a five-year Strategic Plan. The [2020-2024 Strategic Plan](#) includes an output on "effective communications, including branding and visibility, and communication support to programmes and management (social media, website for internal and external audiences)" under its organisational outcome "a well-functioning organisation".

Augmenting the capacity of the Secretariat staff (composed of 8 employees and 4 interns) to effectively use internal and external communication is particularly important as CRCnct no longer has a dedicated communication officer position as well as no established communications strategy.

Improved internal communication capacity will enable CRCnct Secretariat to better and more widely mobilize, engage, and coordinate Network members in realizing the organisation's mission. This will allow the Network to speak with one powerful voice before UN mechanisms, State representatives and other decision-makers on behalf of children throughout the world.

Improved external communication capacity will enhance the effectiveness and impact of CRCnct's advocacy for the realization of children's rights, allow CRCnct to better and more widely convene, mobilize, and engage other civil society actors, including children, experts, academics, and others in joint efforts to press for the

implementation of children's rights, as well as improve CRCnct's ability to attract, mobilize and retain funding, as a pre-requisite for the conduct of the organisation's mandate.

CRCnct has been collecting and analysing basic yearly communication statistics on the performance of its internal communication (within the Network) and external communication (to its target audiences), as part of its organisational monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. The findings of CRCnct team's analysis of the 2020 communication data have informed a needs assessment which in turn has informed this capacity-building programme.

3. Objectives of the capacity-building programme

The overall objective of this capacity-building programme is to improve the effectiveness of both internal (within the Network) and external (outside the Network) communication undertaken by CRCnct Secretariat staff in support of the organisation's mission.

Four specific objectives are pursued:

1. To support CRCnct staff with better mainstreaming external communication into the cycle of programme implementation (including by designing and piloting the implementation of an external communication process around a key activity of CRCnct);
2. To improve the ability and confidence of CRCnct staff to identify and use the most effective and available suite of communication channels, tools and techniques based on the targeted audience, as well as their writing skills for more powerful, effective, and tailored advocacy messages and storytelling;
3. To improve the ability of CRCnct staff to effectively communicate with Network members with a view to boost their mobilization and engagement in the pursuit of the organization's mission; and,
4. To equip CRCnct with a realistic and effective communications strategy/plan to guide the work on communications across the organization (feeding into the three other objectives).

It is expected that the capacity-building programme will produce the following results:

1. CRCnct staff are aware of, and start referring to, an external communication process outlining the steps to take *before, during and after* a major activity (as a means to better integrate external communication into the cycle of programme implementation);
2. CRCnct staff are empowered to communicate in a more consistent, engaging, impactful and non-technical manner, to adapt the content of their external communication to diverse audiences, channels and goals, and to use to the best of their capacity the available external communication channels, tools and techniques for both advocacy and storytelling purposes;
3. CRCnct staff are better able to outreach and engage member organisations in the life and work of the Network through improved internal communication skills, more targeted content, and appropriate tools; and,
4. As a cross-cutting outcome, CRCnct staff are aware of, and start using, the organizational communications strategy/plan in implementing communication activities.

4. Overview of the consultancy

The consultancy activities will be undertaken in line with the work plan developed by CRCnct, between July 2021 and January 2022, with the final deliverables due and contract concluding by 31 January 2022. Capacity-building by the consultant(s) will take the form of training workshops, and on-the-job mentoring and technical assistance.

The below table outlines the activities to be conducted by the consultant(s), the available budget by activity (inclusive of all costs, including VAT), as well as the expected deliverables by activity.

Activities	Available budget (Inclusive of fees and any other cost)	Deliverables
<p>Activity 1.1: Establish a simple, clear process on steps to take to mainstream effective external communication activities into the lifecycle of programme implementation. This may also include guidance or tips for the development of “communication packs” around major activities.</p> <p>Activity 1.2: On-the-job mentoring / technical advice on rolling out the above-mentioned process, identifying the most relevant opportunities with staff</p>	CHF 5,330 (inclusive of VAT) for 9 days	<p>A maximum 5 pages document outlining the written process for effective external communication in programming (incorporating feedback from any pilot phase)</p> <p>A short list of lessons learned from the pilot phase</p>
<p>Activity 2.1: Preparation for, and delivery, of a two-day training course on communication means: how to make the most of the available suite of CRCnct’s external and internal communication tools (websites, social media, Network newsletter) and identification of what is missing</p>	CHF 4,730 (inclusive of VAT) for 8 days	<p>Training materials</p> <p>List of relevant background readings</p>
<p>Activity 3.1: Preparation for, and delivery, of a two-day training course on writing skills: how to develop and tailor messages to CRCnct’s various external and internal audiences, goals pursued (advocacy, storytelling, and outreach), and communication channels used; how to convey the work and messages of CRCnct in an engaging, impactful and non-technical manner; and tips for effective storytelling</p>		<p>Training materials</p> <p>List of relevant background readings</p>
<p>Activity 4.1: On-the-job mentoring / technical advice on the development, by CRCnct, of a realistic and effective communications strategy/plan, building on learnings from the capacity-building initiatives</p>	CHF 3,550 (inclusive of VAT) for 6 days	A short list of lessons learned from the capacity-building support
TOTAL BUDGET	CHF 13,610	

Upon the start of their contract, the consultant(s) will be requested to **propose a methodology** as to how they intend to approach and deliver this capacity-building programme to ensure relevant, effective, and long-term gains for CRCnct staff. At minimum, this will include (i) a desk review of relevant communication and programme documents and records, as well as of the communication performance statistics; and (ii) consultations with CRCnct staff and management on needs, constraints, opportunities, etc. The consultant(s) are expected to develop a **participative** methodology as a key factor for ensuring that the support is relevant, effective, and sustainable for CRCnct staff.

CRCnct staff will provide technical and logistical support as appropriate throughout the consultancy (compilation of relevant documents, assisting with scheduling meetings if desired, feedback on the methodology, etc.).

5. Application guidelines

The selected consultant or team of consultants should have demonstrated experience in developing and implementing communication strategies, ideally for advocacy and policy work as well as training experience on relevant topics.

Additional information about desired qualifications is listed below:

- Demonstrated experience in developing, implementing and monitoring communication strategies, ideally for advocacy and policy work
- Demonstrated experience as a trainer or coach on communication skills, including in the not-for-profit sector
- Experience in developing and managing communication content and tools, including websites and social media
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including an ability to distil complex/technical information for diverse non-expert audiences
- Strong interpersonal, facilitation, and presentation skills
- Excellent spoken and written English; other language skills would be an asset
- Previous experience of work in, or collaboration with, a network of organisations is an asset
- A commitment to Child Rights Connect's mission and values

Applications close on **20 June 2021**. Interested candidates are asked to send a **CV (maximum 2 pages) and a short technical proposal (maximum 3 pages)** to recruitment@childrightsconnect.org, with the email subject: Communications Consultant application.

The technical proposal should include a brief overview of the candidate's key skills and experience that are relevant to this consultancy; a concise description of the desired capacity-building approach and methodology; and the names and contact information for three recent references. If you apply as a team of consultants, please specify the roles within your team and clarify who will lead. Note that CRCnct may ask for examples of previous work after reviewing the applications.

Please appreciate that, owing to the volume of expected applicants, only short-listed candidates will be contacted. We regret that we are unable to answer phone enquiries.