

child rights connect

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# UNCRC Reporting Webinar for Canada

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# Agenda

## **Presentation (30 minutes)**

- Introduction by Kathy Vandergrift, CCRC
- Introduction of UNCRC reporting mechanism, with a focus on how civil society, including children, can participate in each stage of the reporting cycle.
- Practical advice and experience sharing from other countries in how to prepare alternative report and supporting child-led reports.
- How NGOs can continue their advocacy efforts after the report submission, such as in participating in pre-session, following-up on implementation of the concluding observations?

## **Question and answer session (30 minutes)**

# WHY THE REVIEW IS IMPORTANT (CCRC PERSPECTIVE)

- Implementation weak in Canada
- Official report is inadequate
  - Little analysis of situation of children
  - Lists good steps – ignores many issues
- Civil Society Input Essential
- Implementation would make Canada work better for children

# CCRC STRATEGY

- Use review as part of on-going strategy
- Two prongs:
  - Use reports to raise profile of issues in Canada
  - Use reports to inform UN and get strong recommendations back to Canada
- Demonstrate public support for implementation

# Who are Child Rights Connect?



WHO WE ARE ▾

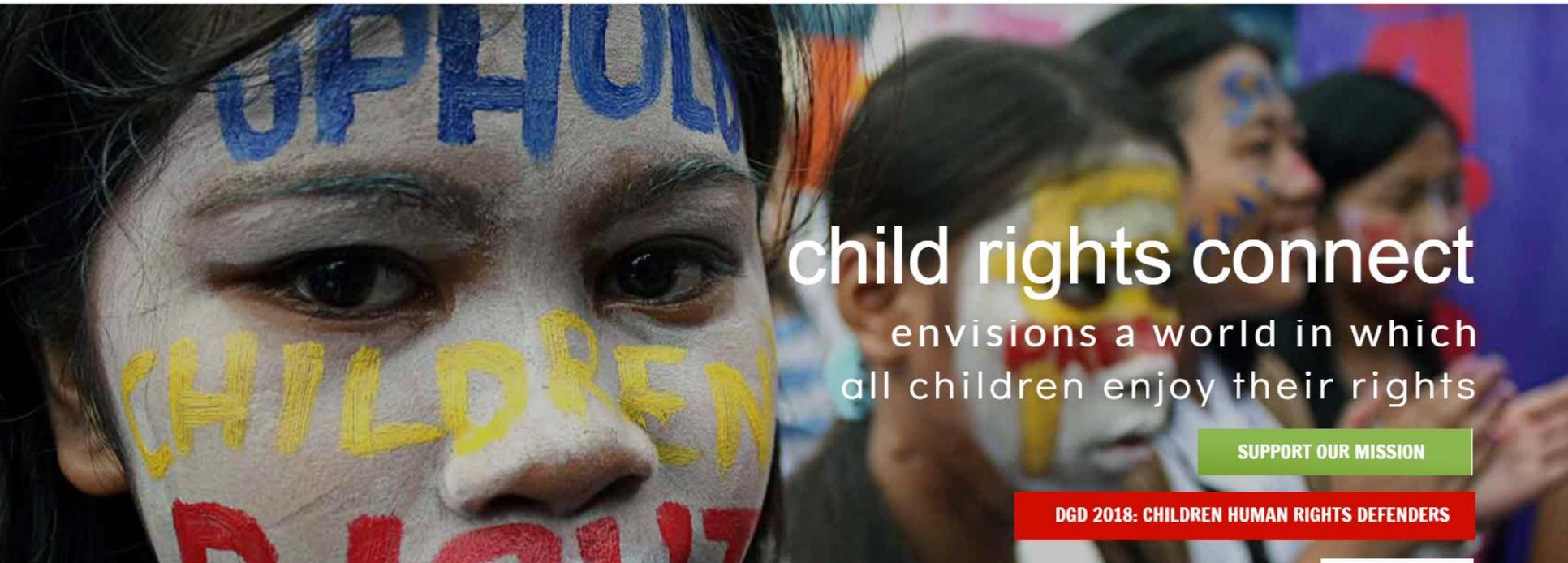
WHAT WE DO ▾

WHAT YOU CAN DO ▾

RESOURCES ▾

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envisions a world in which  
all children enjoy their rights

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DGD 2018: CHILDREN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

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# The CRC Convention



**2 November 1989 –  
2 September 1990**



It is the most widely-ratified –  
i.e. accepted – international  
human rights treaty with 196  
States parties.



Covers civil, political,  
economic, social and cultural  
rights.



Created the UN Committee on  
the Rights of the Child to  
monitor how States parties  
implement its provisions.



Article 45 provides a legal  
basis for cooperating with civil  
society



# THE CRC COMMITTEE

- 18 members
- Members are independent experts elected by States
- Meets 3 times a year for 1 month each in Geneva
  - 3 weeks of session (State party examination)
  - 1 week pre-session (NGO and UN preliminary examination)

[https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/  
Pages/Membership.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/Membership.aspx)

# Areas of work of the Committee

- **Monitoring States parties' implementation of the CRC and its Optional Protocols**
- **General Comments**  
Authoritative interpretation of the CRC and its Optional Protocols
- **Days of General Discussion**  
Foster a deeper understanding of the contents and implications of the CRC and its Optional Protocols during a one-day public discussion
- **Communications Procedure**  
New procedure to examine individual complaints or conduct inquiries into grave or systematic violations.

# The CRC reporting process



<http://crcreporting.childrightsconnect.org/>

**CRC guidelines and handbooks –**  
<https://www.childrightsconnect.org/publications/>

# Why Engage In The Reporting Cycle?

- A **unique opportunity** to bring concerns about children to experts with legal authority
- A way to dialogue with government officials and **influence the agenda** in the country through a **rights-based approach**
- A way to **facilitate public scrutiny** of government policies and have an open debate on the status of children in the country
- A way to **empower and strengthen civil society**, including **children!**
- A participatory process which can support the empowerment of children as human rights defenders and **child-led initiatives**
- A **strategic** way to monitor and advocate for children's rights in your country by using the reporting cycle as a basis of your work plan

# How To Influence The State Report?

- What is the level of political engagement already?
  - What is the political climate for civil society? The level of risk?
  - How might this affect your alternative reporting?
  - Are there government civil society consultations already happening?
  - Is the government planning to consult with children?
- Advocate to make sure the authorities engage relevant stakeholders in the drafting process.
- Use this entry point to establish a dialogue with your government in view of making the CRC Reporting a constructive tool for change at national level.
- If your State party is due to submit an integrated report, it is useful to remind the government department coordinating the drafting of the report that the OPAC and/or OPSC must be integrated and given due attention in the report.

\*Bear in mind that the State may not inform civil society and prepare/submit a report without transparency

# Preparation of an alternative report

- Start as early as possible, and consider: is it a comprehensive or thematic report? What areas of child rights will you cover? Will you use desk research / collect data through consultations? Which other stakeholders will you be collaborating with? Will you involve children and how? Is the report confidential or public?
- **The report should include:**
  - ✓ A title page
  - ✓ A table of contents based on the official reporting guidelines for States. [CRC reports](#)
  - ✓ An introduction:
    - the list of authors and contributors
    - an explanatory note on the methodology followed for the drafting of the report
    - general situation in the State/impact on the implementation of the CRC
  - ✓ A substantive analysis:
    - situation analysis organised by cluster of rights
    - comments on the State report
    - concrete examples
  - ✓ A summary of your key recommendations at the end of each cluster
  - ✓ Conclusion
  - ✓ A **maximum of 20,000 words** (about 30 pages), excluding annexes

# Preparation of an alternative report

## Top tips:

- **Coordinating among civil society** (plus UNICEF / NHRIs / academics)
  - Children's inputs / if not a child-led report (**Guatemala, South Korea**)
  - Plan early! (**Cambodia**)
  - Can be confidential / useful tool for advocacy
  - Include recommendations and a summary of all recommendations (**Scotland/UK**)
  - Keep to the strict word limit of 20,000 words (**Australia**)
- 
- Full details on our CRC reporting mini-site <http://cocreporting.childrightsconnect.org/>
  - Committee's guidelines on submitting an alternative report:  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC/C/58/REV.3&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC/C/58/REV.3&Lang=en)
  - OHCHR details on submissions:  
<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/InfoPartners.aspx>
  - You will need to upload an electronic copy on the **secured online platform**.

# Follow-up to an alternative report

- Follow-up after the alternative report? There are many other opportunities to influence and engage, such as a Committee member country visit.



# Child Participation Procedures

- **Child participation is encouraged throughout the process!**

## **Children can:**

- Prepare children's submissions, either their own or through NGOs
- Request private children's meetings with the Committee during the pre-session
- Prepare an oral presentation during the pre-session and respond to questions
- Both of the above can be through video-conferencing
- Attend / follow plenary sessions of the Committee
- Take part in / lead follow-up activities at different levels

# How To Involve Children?

- CRC Committee guidelines
- **9 basic requirements for child participation**

## Plus some top tips:

- Child safeguarding policy and procedure
- Full process and cycle
- Sustained and long-term at all levels
- Encourage child-led initiatives and reports through child-friendly, accessible information (our child-friendly guide to CRC reporting)
- Support from Child Rights Connect!
- Timing: start as early as possible (especially regarding visas, planning around other commitments like school and exams)
- Anticipate capacity and resources needed well in advance

# What is the timeline for Canada?

- Pre-session: 87 Pre-Sessional Working Group (01 Jun 2020 - 05 Jun 2020) in Geneva
  - > **Deadline for alternative reports: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020**
- State review: 87 Session (11 Jan 2021 – 29 Jan 2021) in Geneva/webcasted
  - > **Deadline for additional information: 15 December 2020**

Check the [CRC session calendar](#):

<u>87</u>	11 Jan 2021	29 Jan 2021	STATES PARTIES REPORTS: <b>Canada</b> , Iceland, Kuwait, Philippines, Viet Nam
<u>87</u> (Pre-Sessional Working Group)	01 Jun 2020	05 Jun 2020	STATES PARTIES REPORTS: <b>Canada</b> , Iceland, Kuwait, Philippines, Viet Nam LISTS OF ISSUES PRIOR TO REPORTING Mauritius, New Zealand, Sweden

# CCRC ROLE

- Assist groups to relate their issues to the CRC and previous recommendations
- Share analysis on specific issues between groups who work on different aspects of children's rights
- Umbrella report that focuses on general measures and links specific issues
- Follow-up through and after process

Thank you for your attention.

*Any questions?*